REBEL MOON

CREATIO: DIRECTOR'S CUT STORYBOARDS

PETER APERLO

TITAN
BOOKS

REBEL

MOON

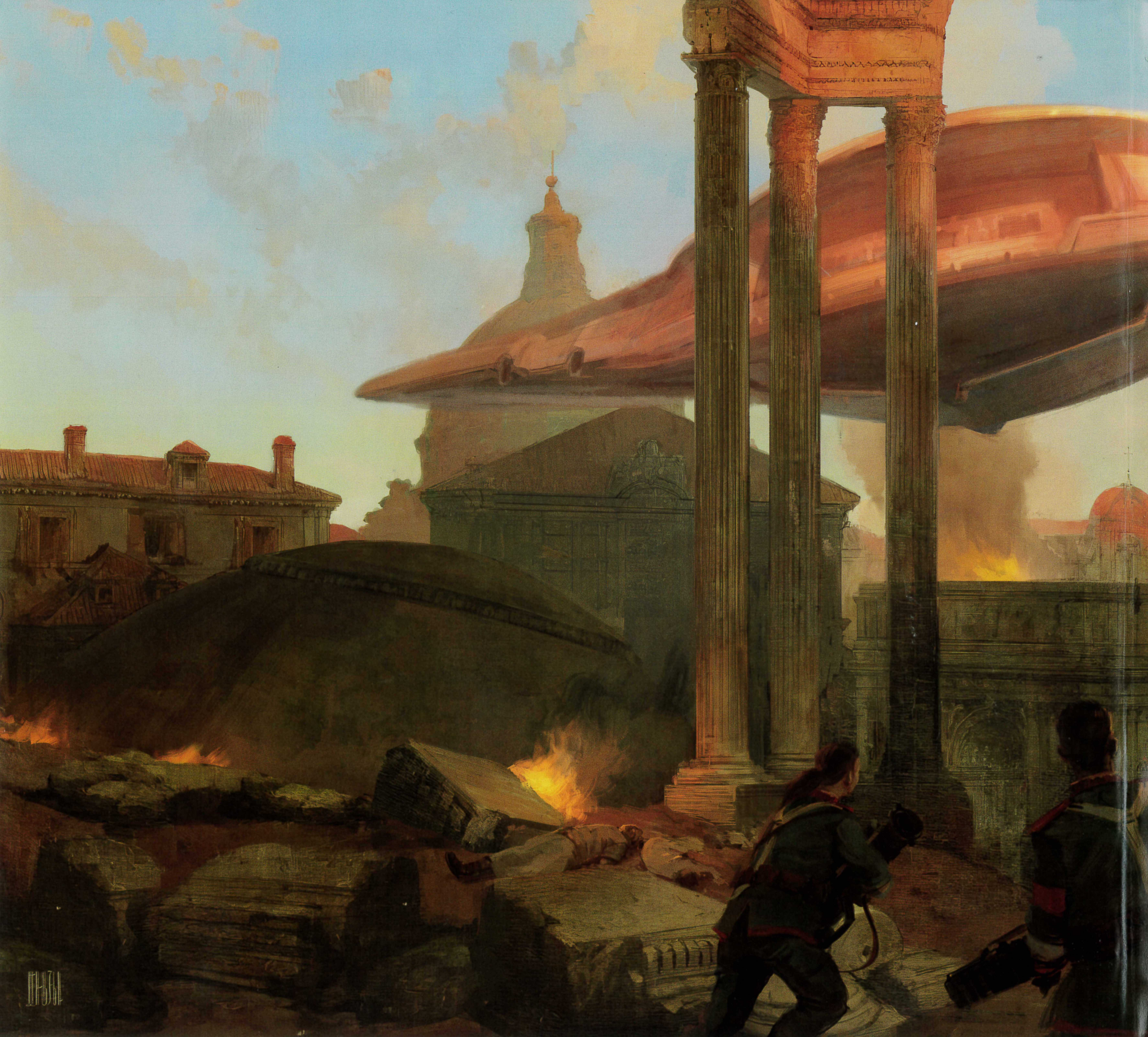
ZACK SNYDER

NUMBER 012 OF A LIMITED EDITION OF 500 COPIES

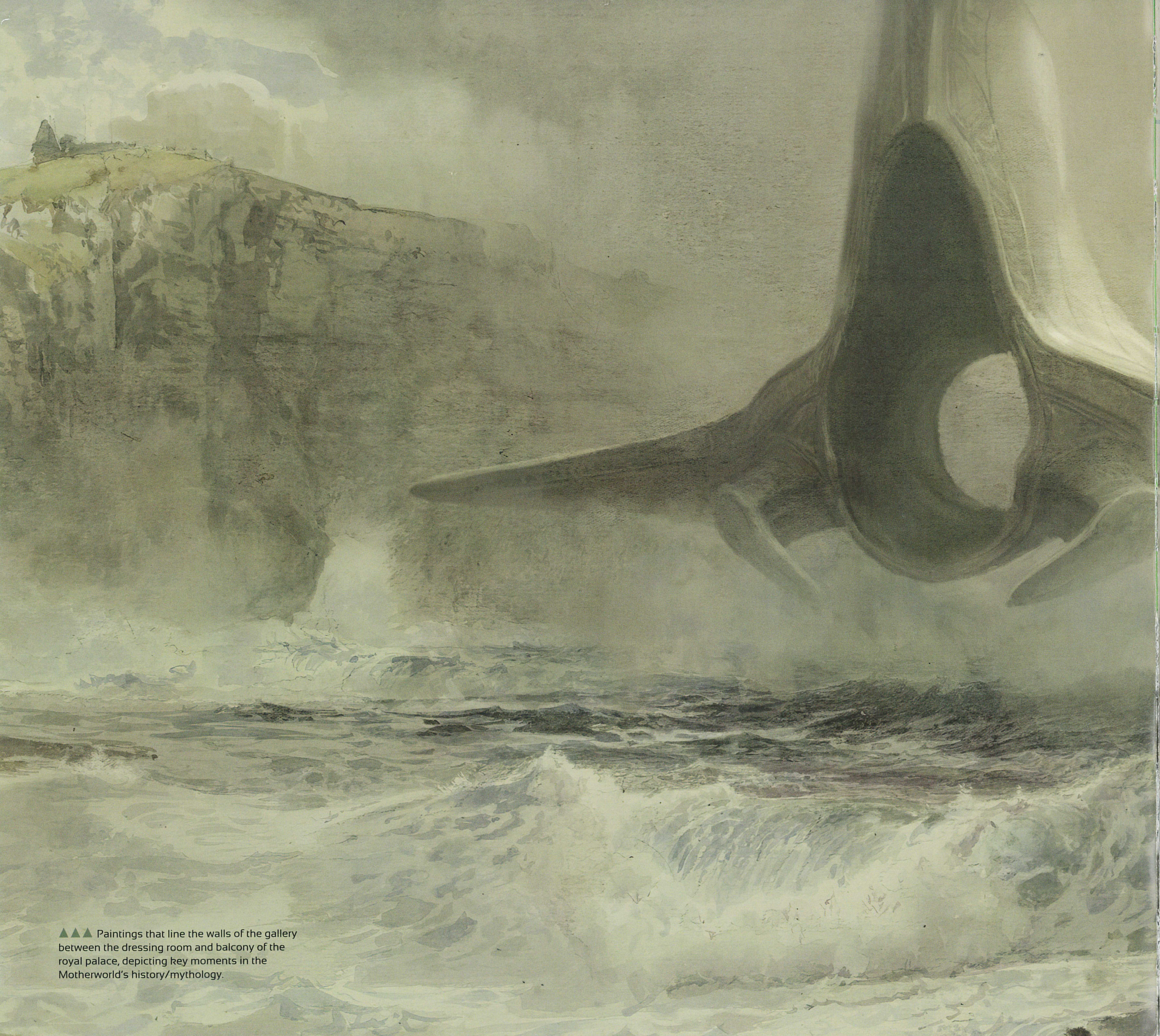
WRITTEN BY PETER APERLO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLAY ENOS, CHRIS STROTHER AND JUSTIN LUBIN

TITAN BOOKS



SPQR



▲▲▲ Paintings that line the walls of the gallery between the dressing room and balcony of the royal palace, depicting key moments in the Motherworld's history/mythology.

CONTENTS

006 INTRODUCTION

012 TOA

022 ASSASSINATION OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

- 030 Royal Family Portraiture

034 THE PASSING OF A RU KALI

- 038 Creating the Language of the Ru Kali

040 KORA'S BACKSTORY

050 JIMMY ON VELDT

27/32
SmallHD
F1
F2
F3
F4
F5
REC
90
f/1.5

INTRODUCTION

ZACK SNYDER IS A GENUINE FAN of the initial PG-13 editions of the *Rebel Moon* films (as well as their impressive viewership numbers on Netflix), and he will tell you that they absolutely have a place and a purpose in easing viewers into the dark universe of his unconventional space opera. But he would be the first to agree that the director's cuts—uncompromising as they are in their brutality—with their more expansive palettes, allow for more depth of character, richer history, and more nuanced mythology. He would also agree that the fact that they got made at all is something of a miracle. "The three-hour, R-rated versions of *Rebel Moon* 1 and 2, those movies shouldn't exist. They really shouldn't," he says. "It's a bad business decision to make those movies the way they are, exactly, but it ends up being fun for the audience, I think, in the end. They get something that they shouldn't be getting, and any time that happens, any time a movie is birthed that shouldn't exist, then that's good."

In case anyone might think that the R-rated films merely contain some graphic violence, more adult subject matter, and a few extended scenes as compared to the PG-13 ones, Snyder is quick to point out it's more appropriate to think of them as two separate duologies. "They kind of are parallel universes, rather than different cuts," he says. "In the R-rated version, even in just normal scenes, it's different takes of the same lines. We just chose a different take because it was more in the spirit of that version. If you look at the movies, they diverge a bit in their timelines. Things happen at different moments. Like the fixing of the dropship. That doesn't happen in the PG version of the first movie, right? But it does in the R-rated version. Then in the PG version of the second movie, they just pull it out and fly it."

So, while the two earlier hardback volumes are meant to support the shorter films, this supplemental material seeks to fill in some of the gaps of story and nuance between those and the director's cuts. In addition to exploring many of the extended and all-new sequences, we'll look at some

◀ Zack Snyder directs the royal family assassination scene on the dreadnought engine room set.

▶ Snyder shares a joke on set with first assistant director/co-producer Misha Bukowski.

of the considerable work that went into generating the storyboards for this epic, most of which were drawn by Snyder himself. "I think I did close to four thousand drawings for the two movies together. It's the most drawings I've ever done for any movie, by far," he says. It should be no surprise by now that creating visual art has always been in Snyder's blood. His mother, Marsha, was a painter and a photographer, who gave him his first camera; he even studied painting in England for a year after high school, before heading off to earn his film degree at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, California. "I draw ninety per cent of the drawings, and I have my entire career, since back in my commercial days. I have all the stacks of books [of storyboards] from *Dawn of the Dead* [2004] till now," Snyder says.

Still, he's not above spreading the storyboard work around if need be. "For the action sequences, or if it's really labor intensive, I'll get some help from Jared [Purrington] or Jay [Oliva], to do some heavy lifting with what I would call shot-intensive sequences." Some examples would be the shootout in the brothel in Providence in the first film, or the massive Battle of Veldt in the second. "But that's the exception, not the norm," Snyder adds.

Being as hands on as Snyder was throughout the development, pre-production,

production, and post-production process, it was crucial that he have detailed storyboards as a tool to communicate his ideas visually to his team. "It was quite a labor, but it was really important. When we're having pre-production meetings, I use the drawings pretty much instead of the script. I'm always like, 'Guys, don't read the script, look at the drawings.' I've filtered the script through the drawings. When you make a really heavy visual effects film like this, it's helpful for everyone to know what they have to build, what they don't have to build, and what's going to be in the frame. I'm pretty clean with my storyboards as far as, 'This is the shot, so just do that. You don't have to cover the sides, because I'm just going to put *this* in the frame.' So, that's helpful, and I think it keeps the budget under control a bit."

The storyboards not only laid out the scope of work for the art department and the visual effects artists, but they also proved instrumental for other phases of production. For example, they served as a frame and placeholders that allowed the editorial team to get a jump on assembling this mammoth project. "I build the entire movie from the beginning with all the storyboards," says editor Dody Dorn, "then as the material comes in, I start taking those out and putting in the cut scenes."

▼ Snyder directs Sofia Boutella as the newly graduated Kora/Arthelais leading troops in battle for the first time.

The actors, too, appreciated the clarity the drawings brought. "It's been really interesting and amazing working with Zack," says Charlie Hunnam, who portrays the wily smuggler, Kai. "He shows up and he's already imagined it, storyboarded it... He has done all of the requisite work for that, to plan that visual language, so he knows it inside and out." And if there was any anxiety that all that planning would stifle the actors' individual creativity, it was immediately banished. "The fear would be, for an actor stepping into a situation like that, that there's not going to be any room left for us to really contribute and to collaborate with him, and for finding it on the day. But what's been incredible is Zack's ability to incorporate everybody's ideas into his own vision in a really generous and immediate and effortless—and non-precious—way. It's a unique experience to have a director who knows so precisely what they want, and also gives the room for actors to come and contribute their own ideas. So, it's been a real joy," says Hunnam.

◀◀ Boutella and Snyder hug on set.

▲ Snyder with Cary Elwes as the King.

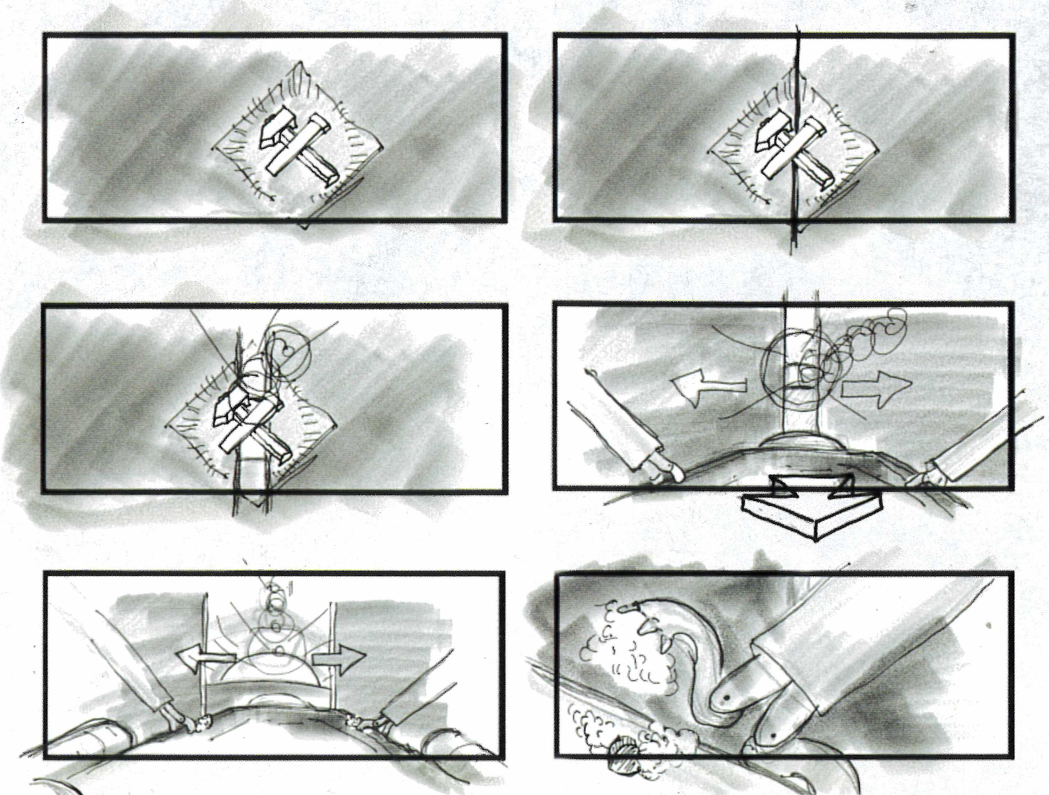
◀ Snyder directs Elizabeth Martinez as Young Kora, about to meet Balisarius.

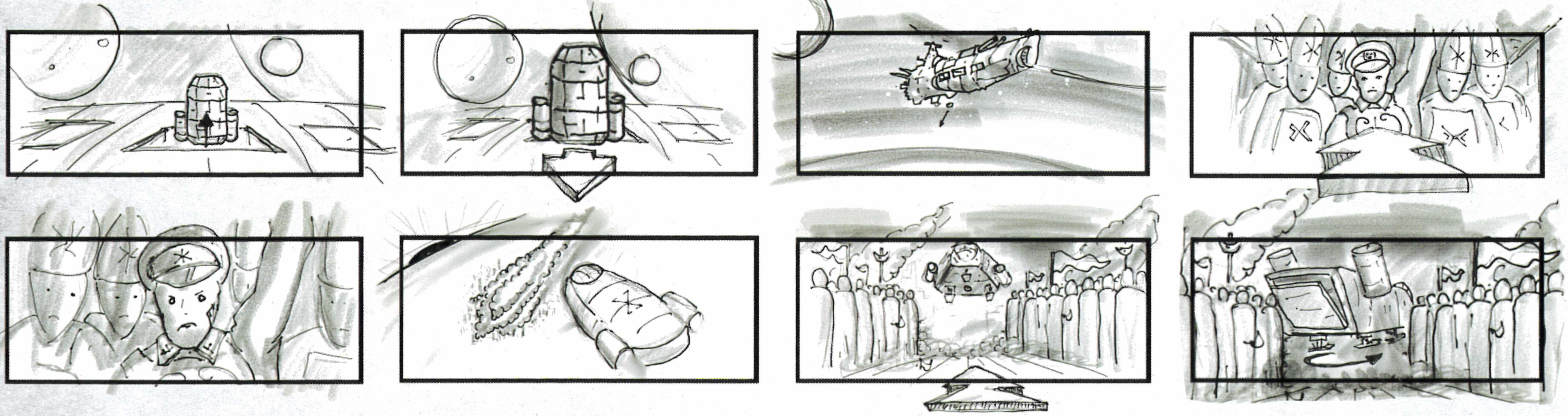
▶ Snyder filming Stella Grace Fitzgerald as Princess Issa with a handheld camera.

REBEL MOON
GYM
NOCTISCOPE
50
75

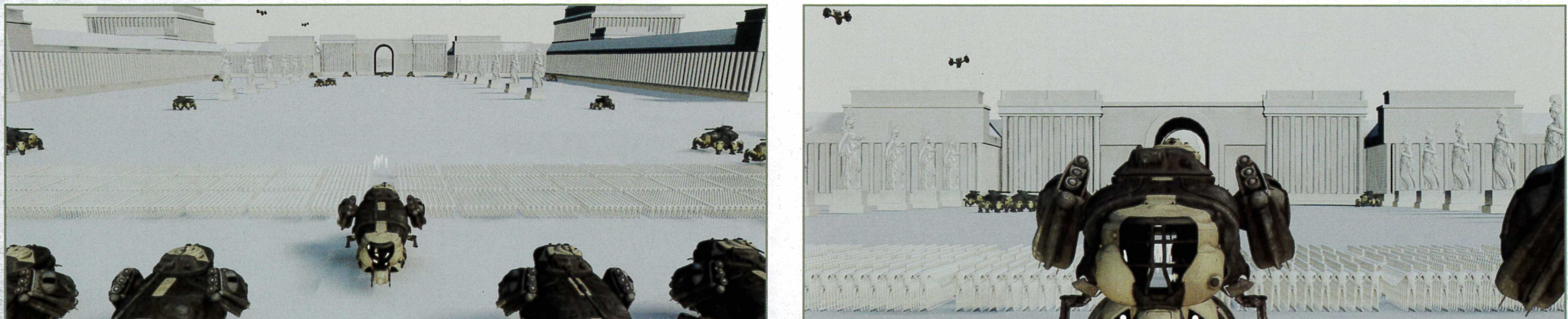
TOA

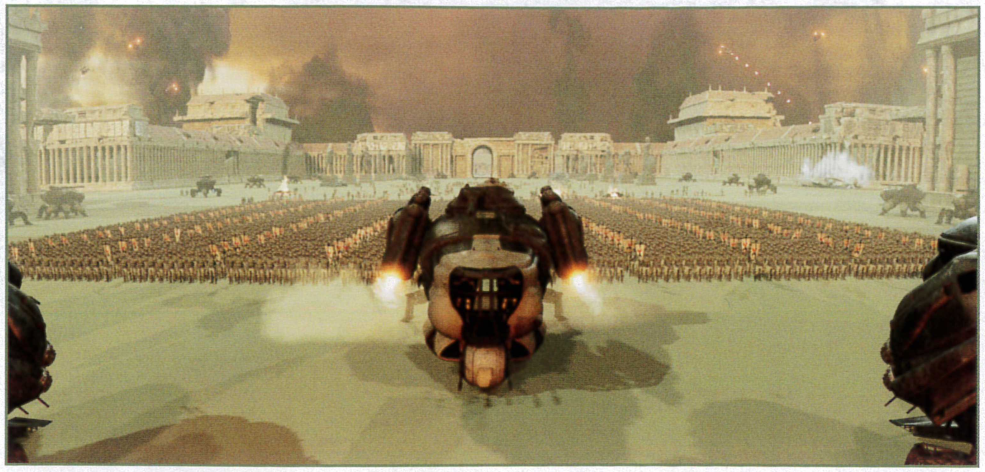
A SEQUENCE COMPLETELY ABSENT from the PG-13 version of *Rebel Moon: A Child of Fire* tells the personal backstory of Private Aris, the trooper who sides with Sam when his comrades assault her in the mill. We learn that his father was the king of the planet Toa, home to a time-honored civilization being systematically crushed by Admiral Noble and his legions. With the war lost, the ancient monuments of the capital in flames, and the populace being rounded up for nefarious purposes, Aris's father orders his family to take refuge in the throne room of the ruined Citadel while he attempts to hold off the invading soldiers. The endeavor is doomed to failure, however, and amid the cached relics of Toa's storied past, Noble forces Aris to kill his own father before the boy is dragged off as the Motherworld's newest conscript. It being the Imperium's custom to kidnap the children of the elites from conquered worlds, sometimes even grooming them for the military academy, as they did with Titus and Kora.

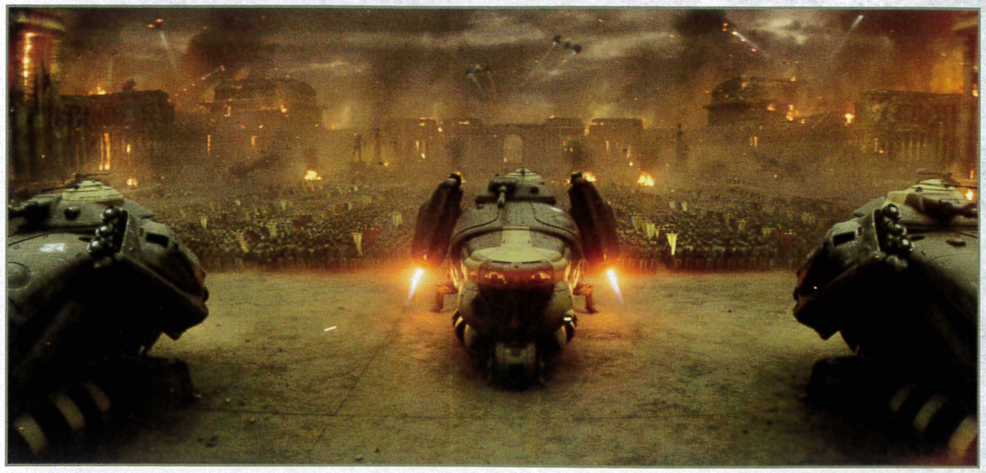


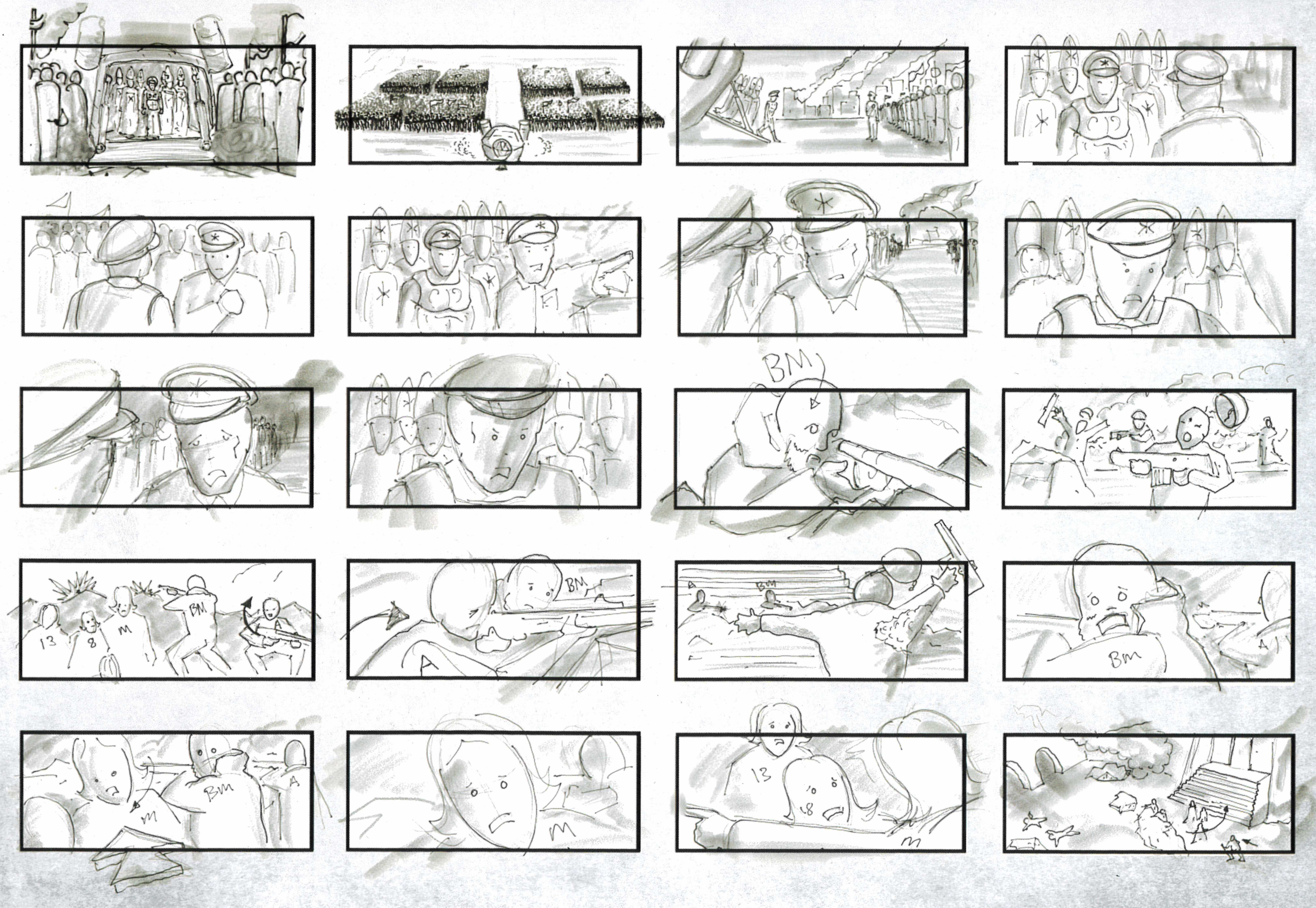


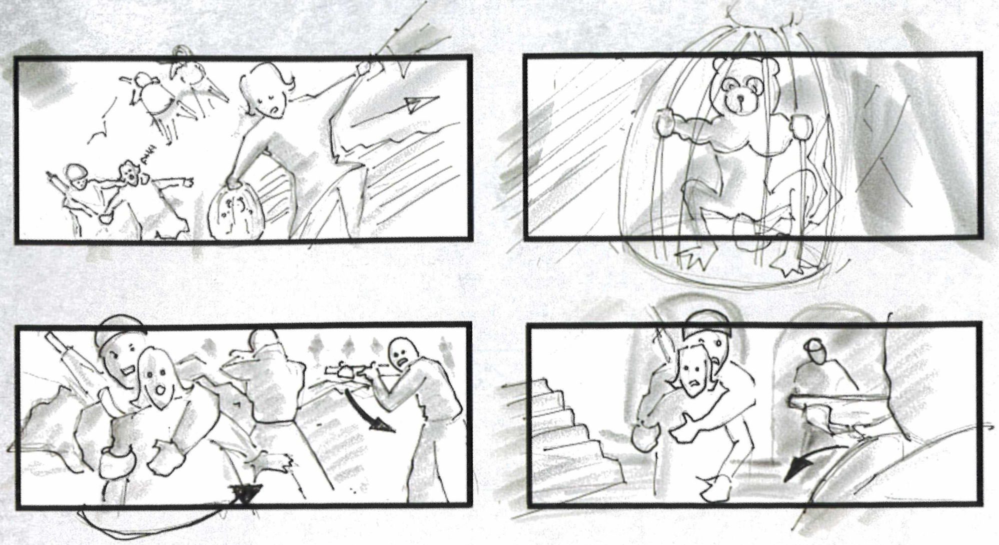
▼▶ The stages of completing a visual effects shot, for Noble's dropship landing in the central plaza on Toa.



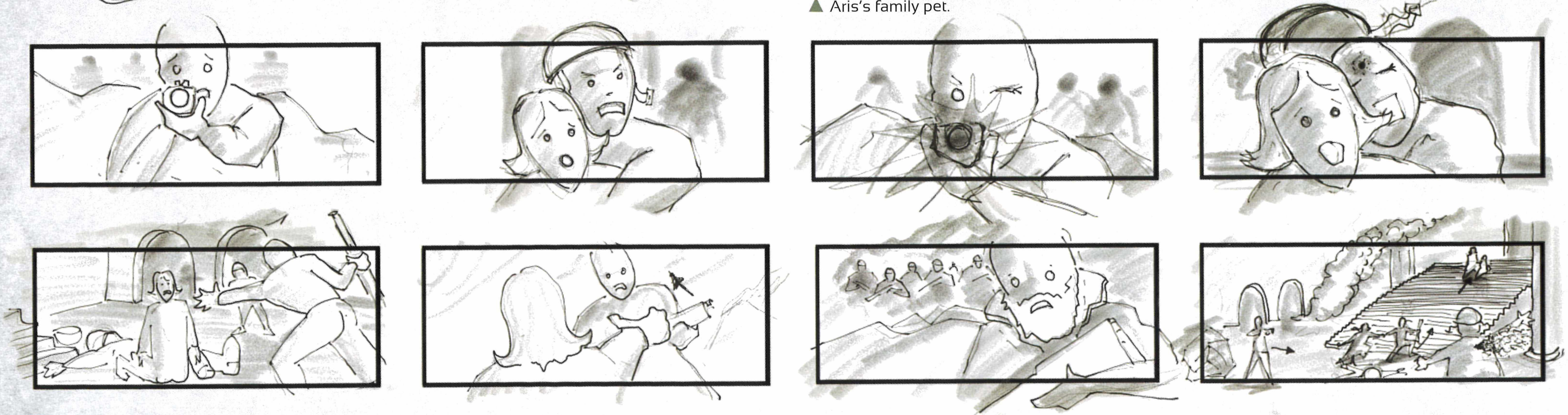




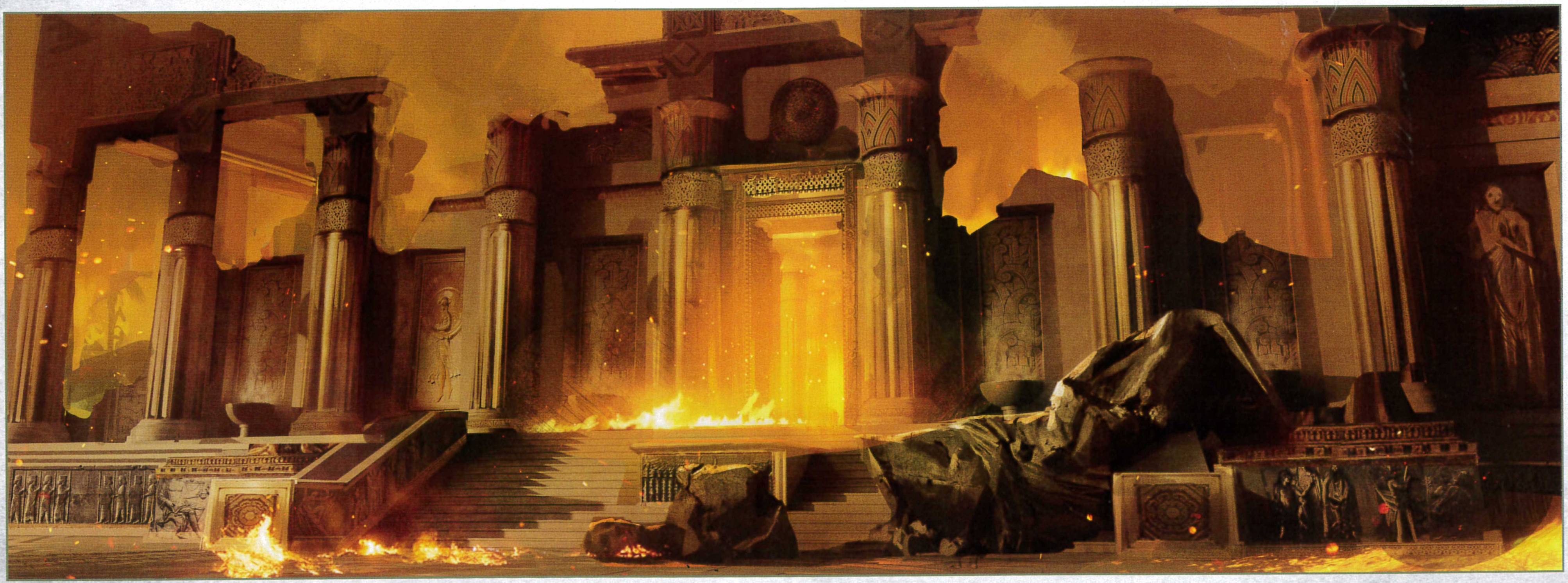

BM
13
8
M
BM
A
BM
A
BM
A
BM
A
M
BM
A
M
13
8
M

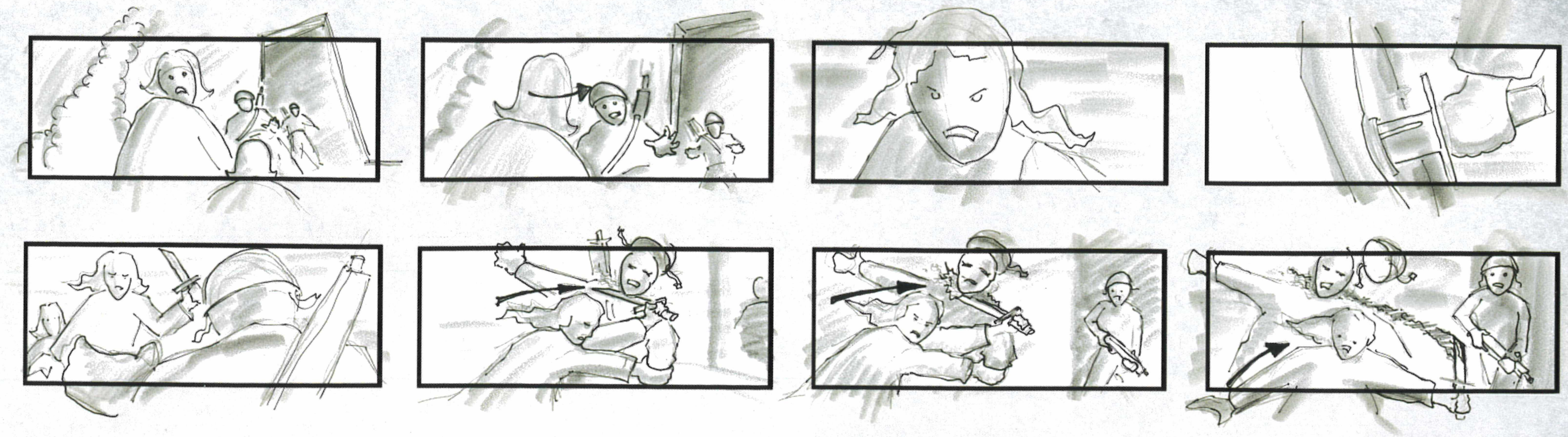


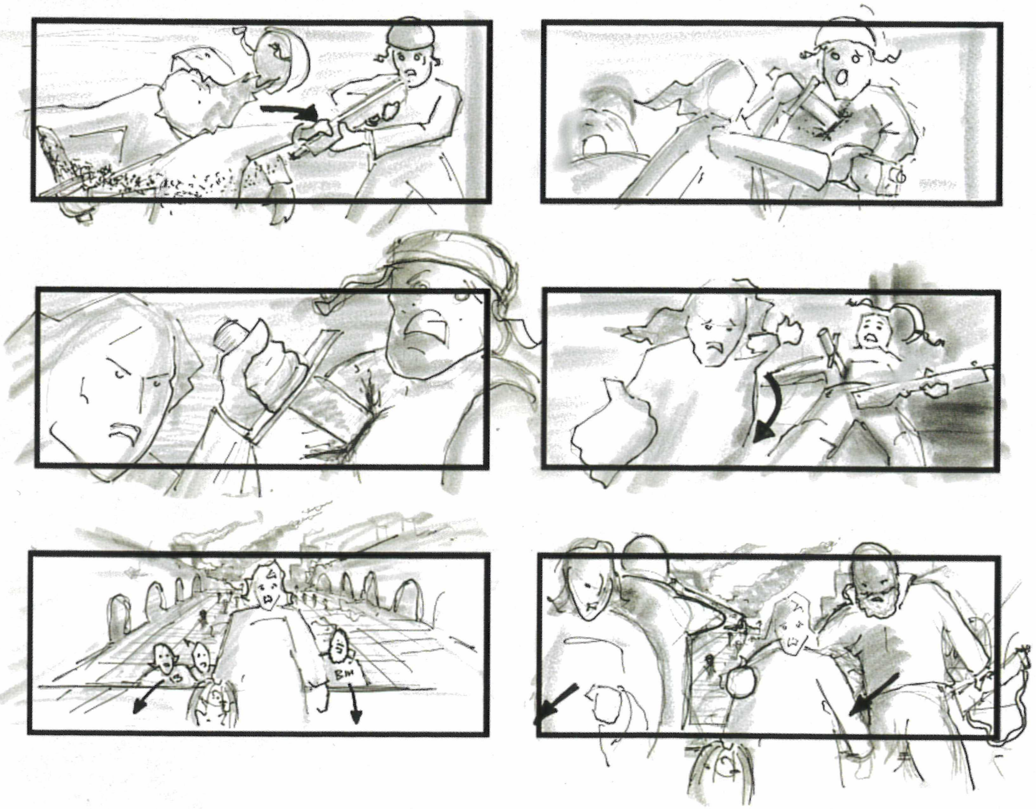
▲ Aris's family pet.



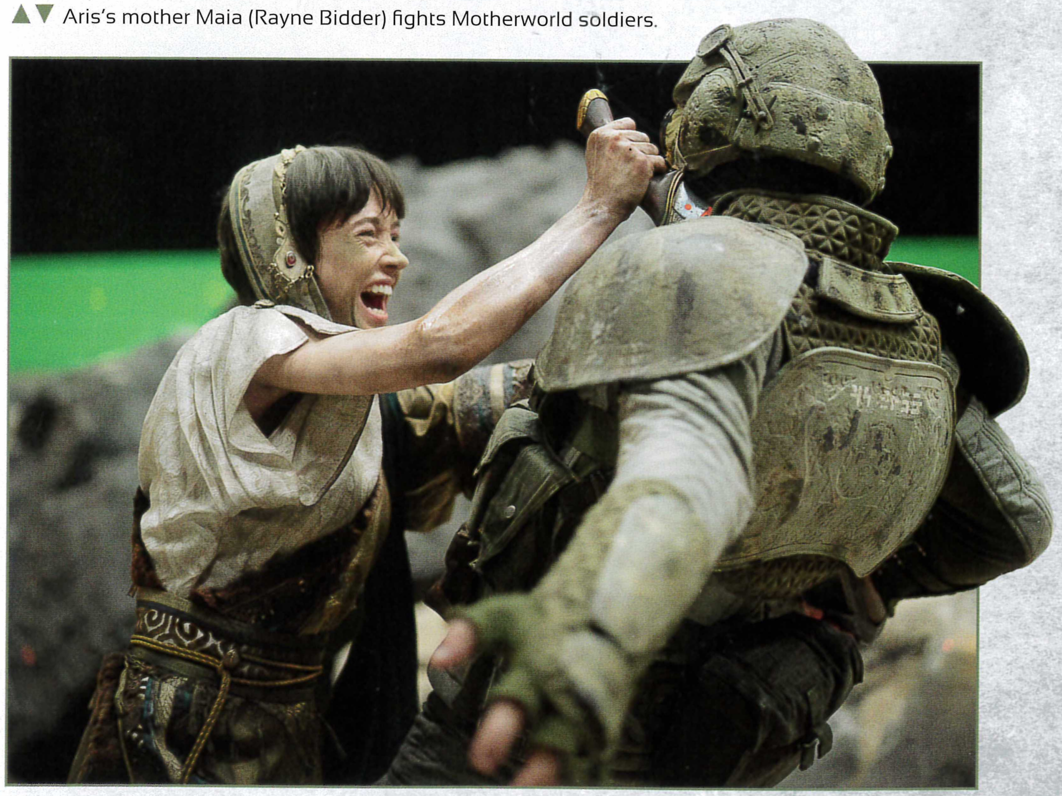
▼ Concept art for the citadel.





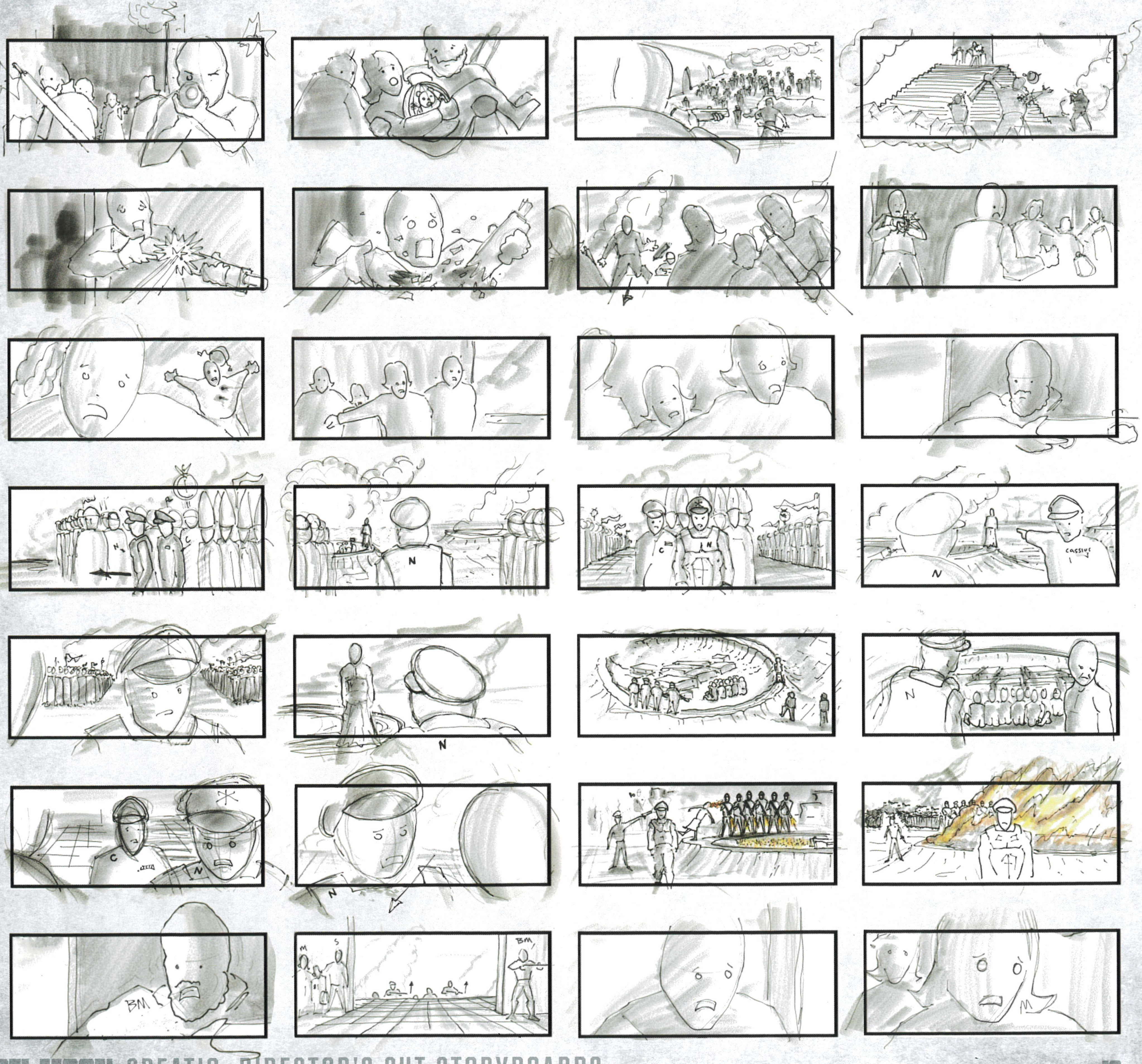


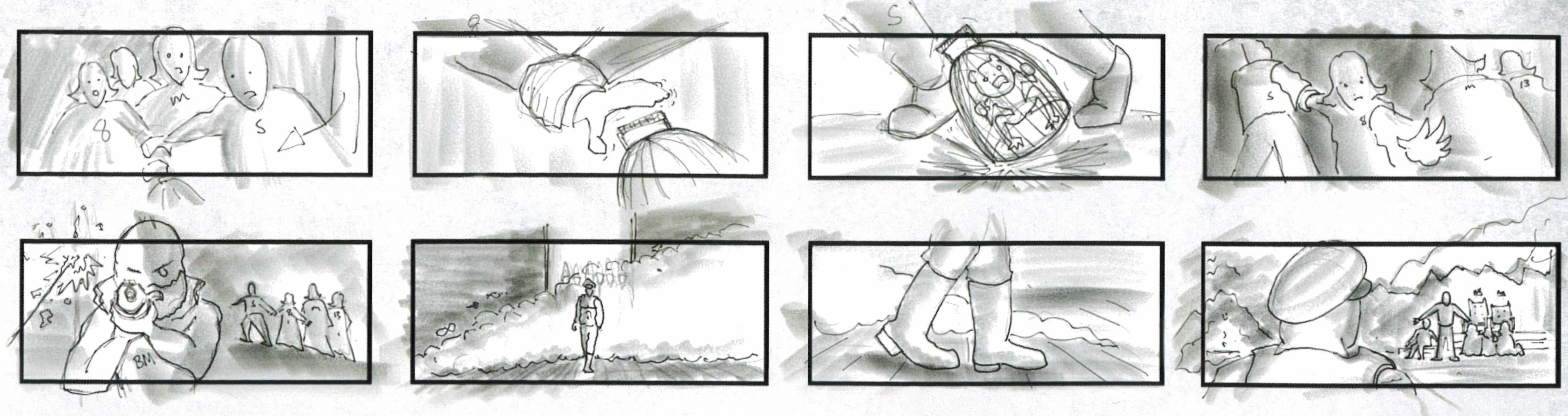
▲▼ Aris's mother Maia (Rayne Bidder) fights Motherworld soldiers.

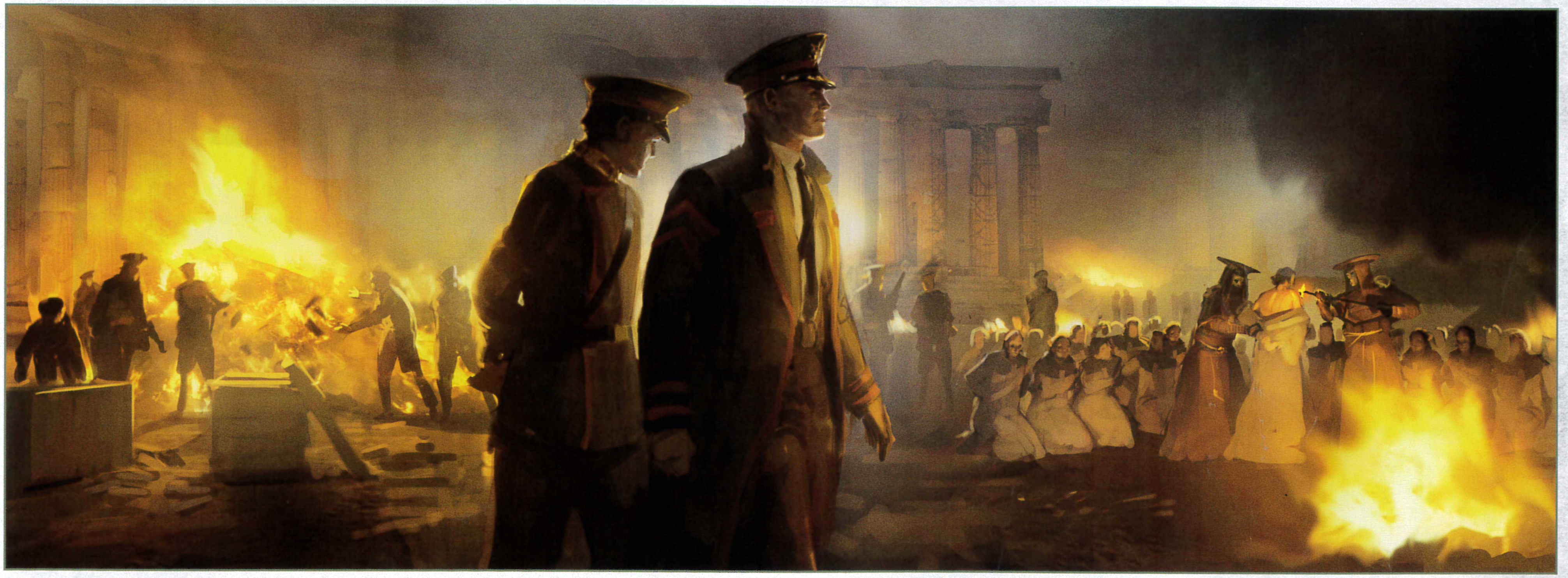


Although it could be considered peripheral to the main narrative of the films, Noble's horrific attack on Toa and the destruction of Aris's family solidly established the type of story Snyder would be telling and how he expected it to look. "We're entering this new world, and there's a pretty broad canvas that we were going to be working with. I thought laying down these mythological images was an important part of the tone and tenor of the universe of *Rebel Moon*," says Snyder. "In the shot making, I was really trying to be very classical and very studied. It was an anamorphic movie, and I really wanted to have these classic compositions, because you're already being introduced to a weirdo world. I thought it'd be nice to ground it in a cinematic language that I was comfortable with."

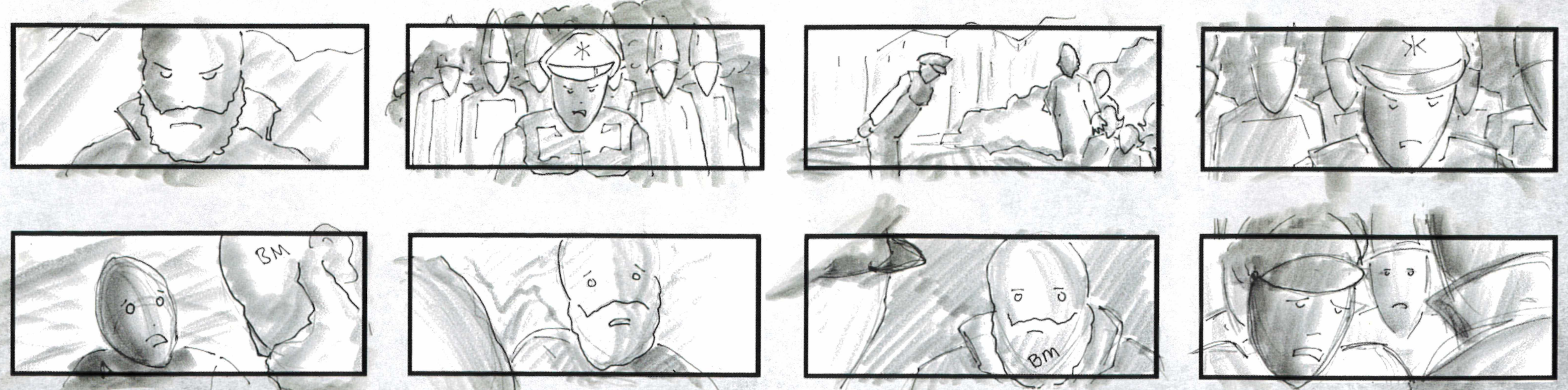
Shot on a stage at Sunset and Gower in Hollywood, the Toa sequence underwent a complicated journey to the screen, owing in part to the unsparing cruelty on display. "The drawings of Toa are not as it was originally written, and not how it was eventually photographed.

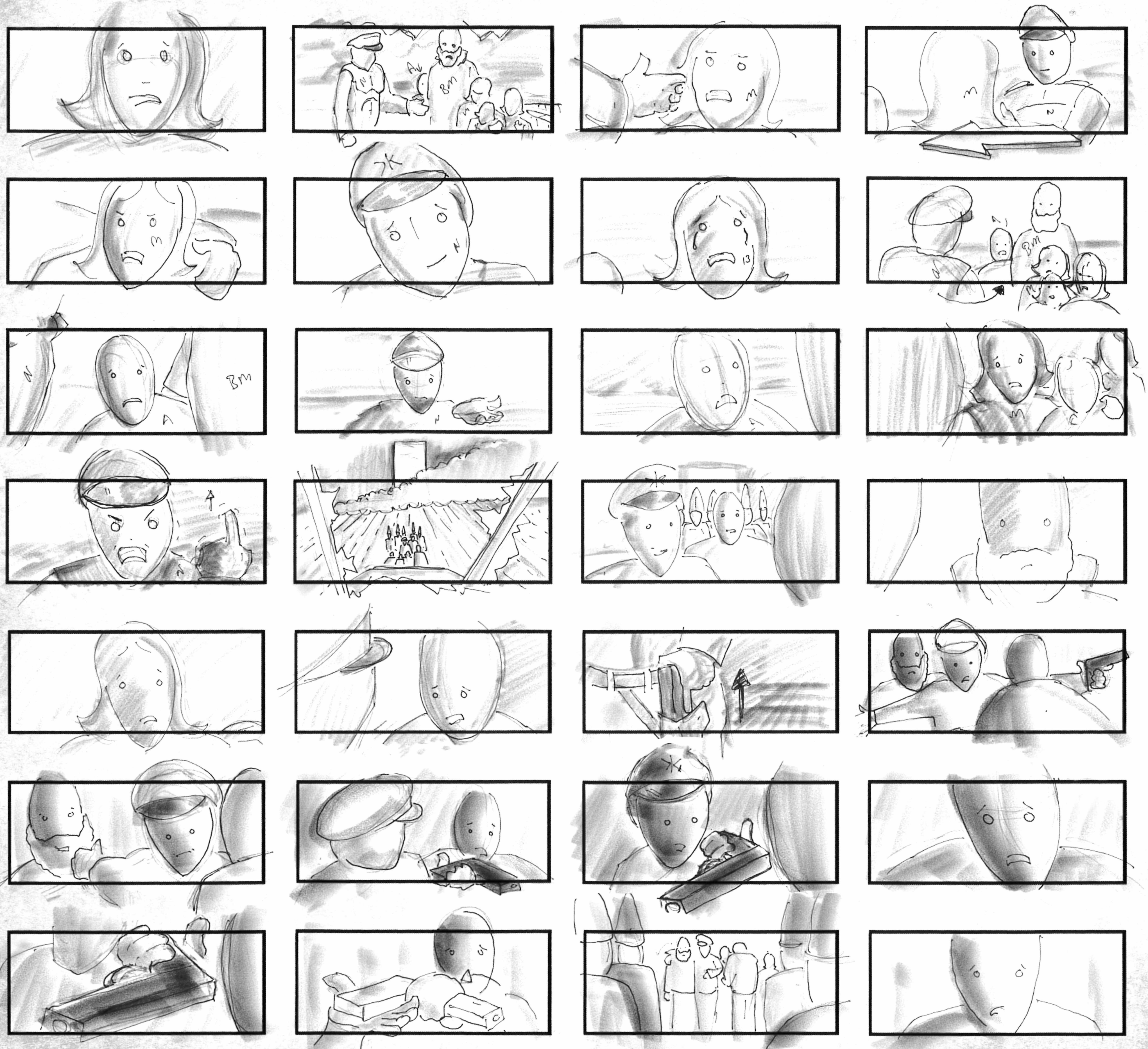

N
C
N
C
N
cassius
N
N
N
N
C
N
N
BM
M
S
BM
M

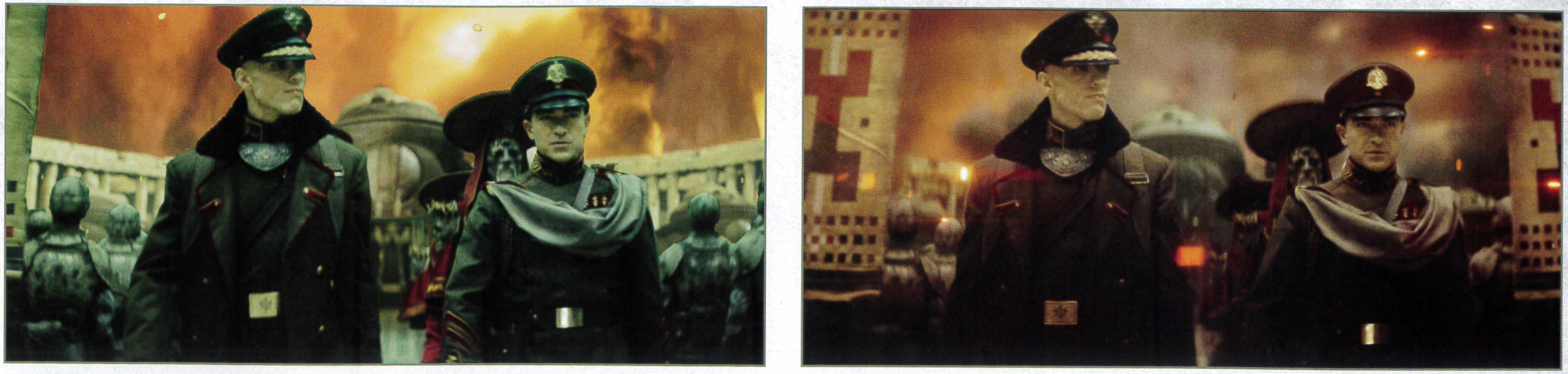




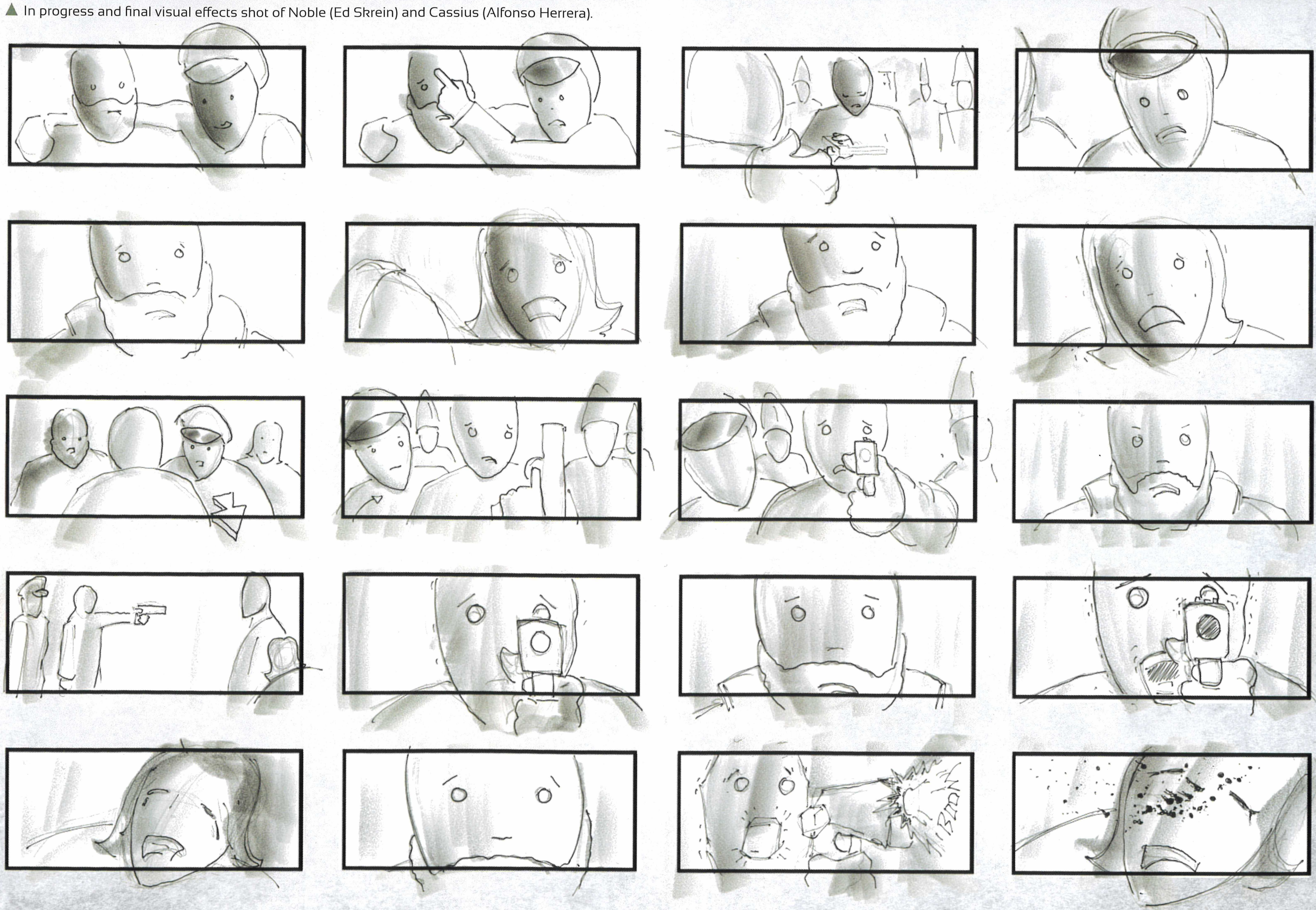
▲ Concept art of Admiral Atticus Noble and Cassius in the central plaza.

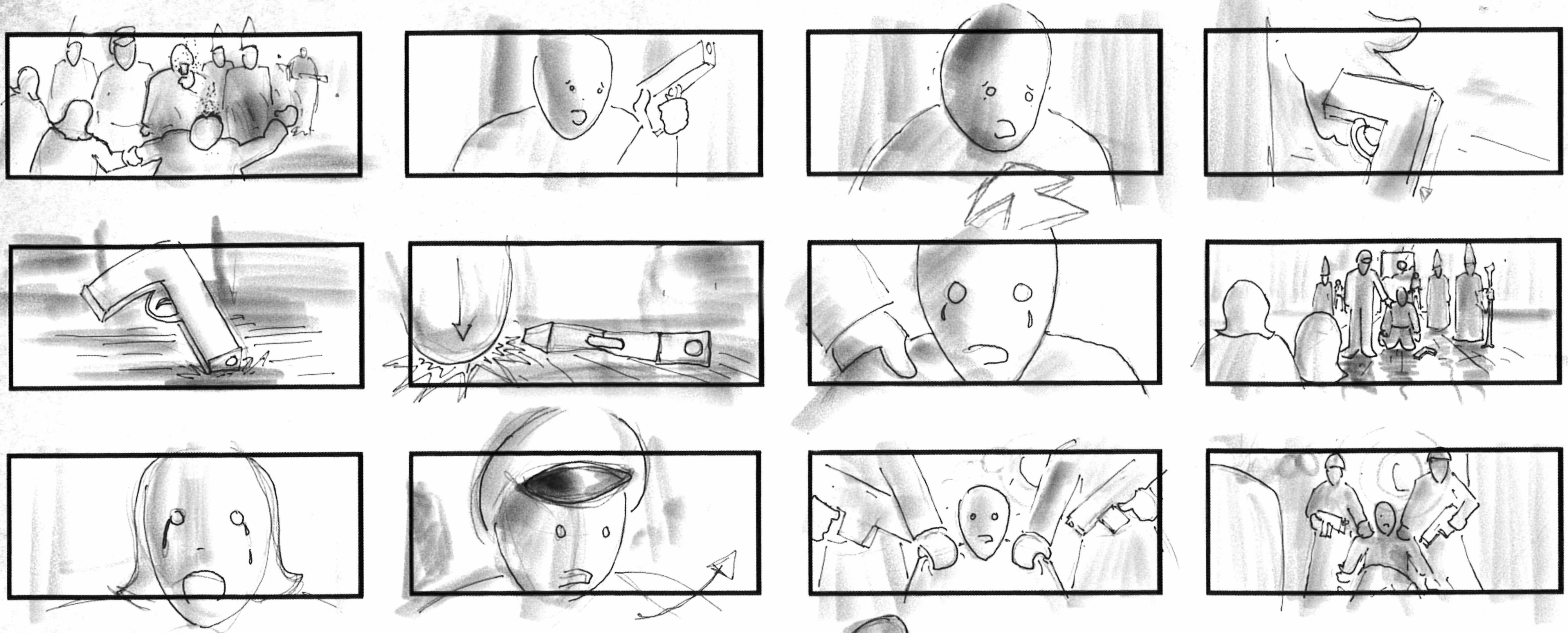



N
BM
M
N
BM
N
BM
A
A
K



In progress and final visual effects shot of Noble (Ed Skrein) and Cassius (Alfonso Herrera).

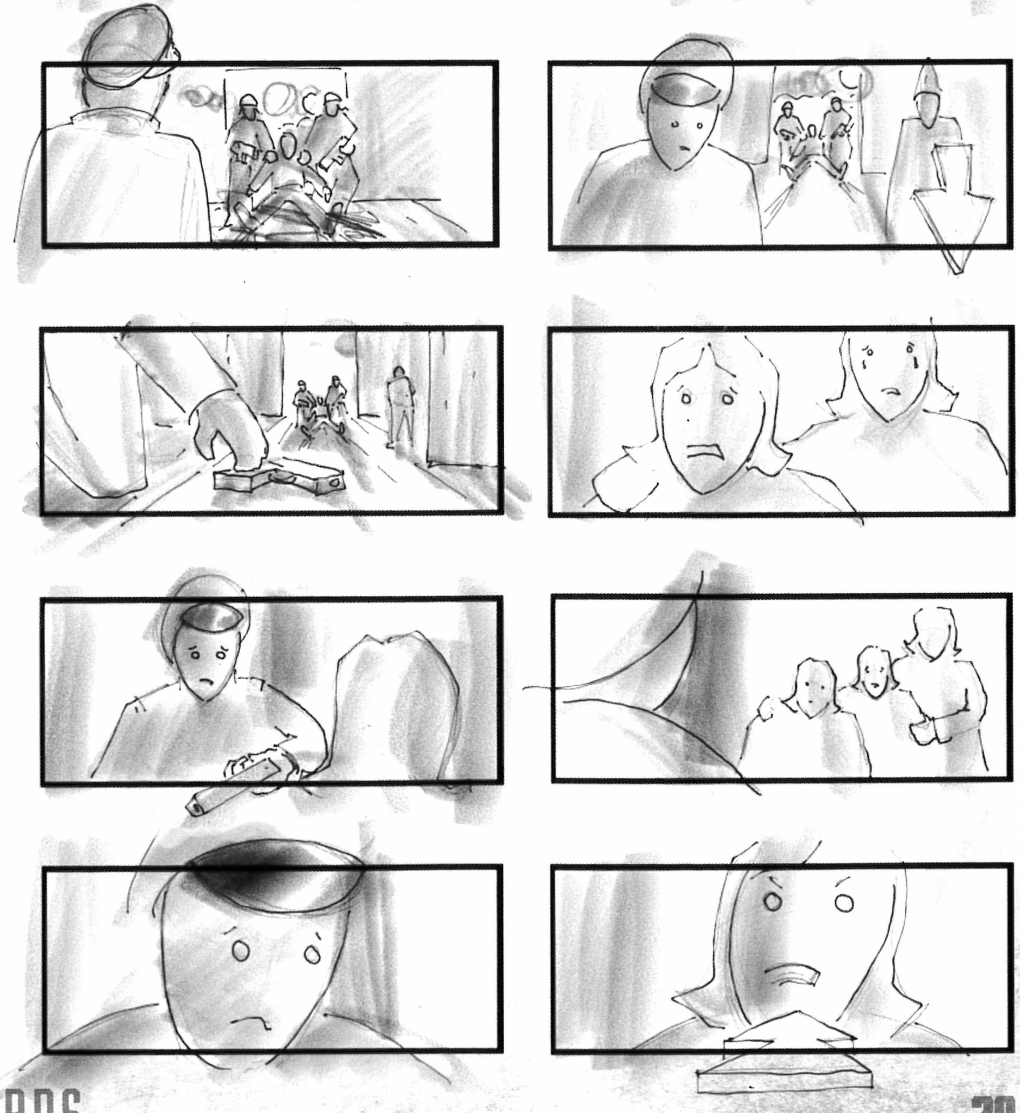


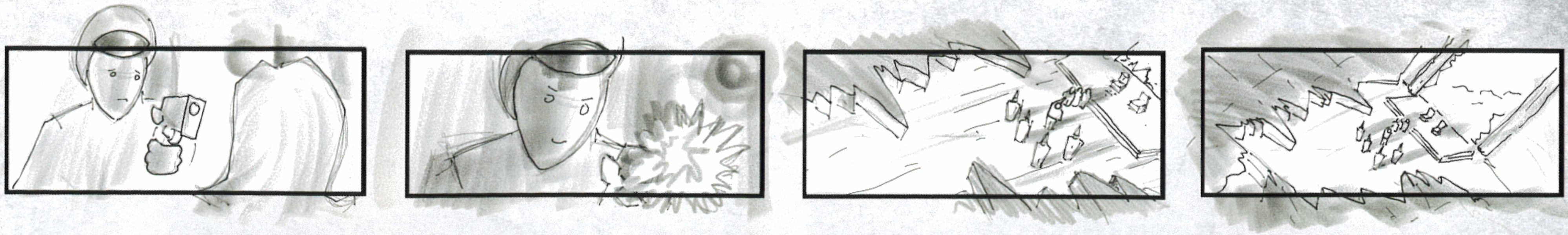


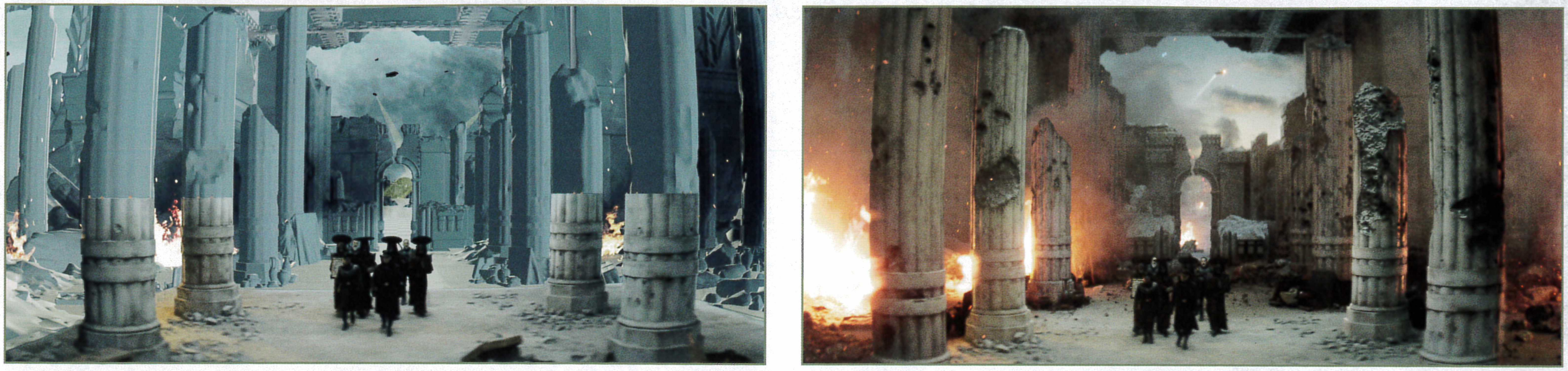
At that point there was this concern that the movie having this sequence at the beginning, where a son beats his father's head in with a club, might be kind of a lot for an audience to handle," Snyder explains. "So you'll see in the storyboards, they include a version of Toa with the son using a gun, which I thought might be less upsetting than the clubbing... Then we ended up excising it from the PG-13 version entirely, and we shot it as it was originally written."

One character proved to be extremely popular with the filmmakers, despite its very brief appearance in the scene. That would be the tiny primate that is the beloved pet of Aris's family. Looking something like Earth's bush baby, it has the extraordinary ability to blow itself to pieces when it chooses to—which it demonstrates to a very surprised squad of Motherworld infantry. So what is it called? Snyder relates that it goes by a few names, depending on who you ask: "He's so cute that everyone just feels compelled to name him. We call him Bergen—Bergen [Swanson], of course, is our line producer, and we thought that was a fun name for him. The visual effects team calls him Timmy... I don't know why. He's also sometimes called Boomer, which was the name of my old dog." And an appropriate moniker for the explosive little guy.

The scene in the throne room also introduces us to a design motif that will be echoed later in the films, a figurative element that would otherwise go unexplained. "One of the things that you'll see is the image behind the throne of the banyan tree, which Sky [Yang, who plays Aris] in movie two paints on his Imperium armor. That was a symbolic image of the Toan culture, this windswept tree," Snyder says. (The use of the banyan tree, originating as a symbol from Yang's own family history, is discussed in *Rebel Moon: Wurm: Ex Materia: Heroes & Monsters*.) "The windswept tree is also a reoccurring motif of doom, and it appears in a couple different spots. For instance, in movie two, in the R-rated version, when the King and Queen are meeting outside [at the country estate], and Kora has the meeting with Balisarius. The royal family is under that windswept tree, which is a cryptic way of referring to doomed royalty, that all the doomed royalty stand under these trees."

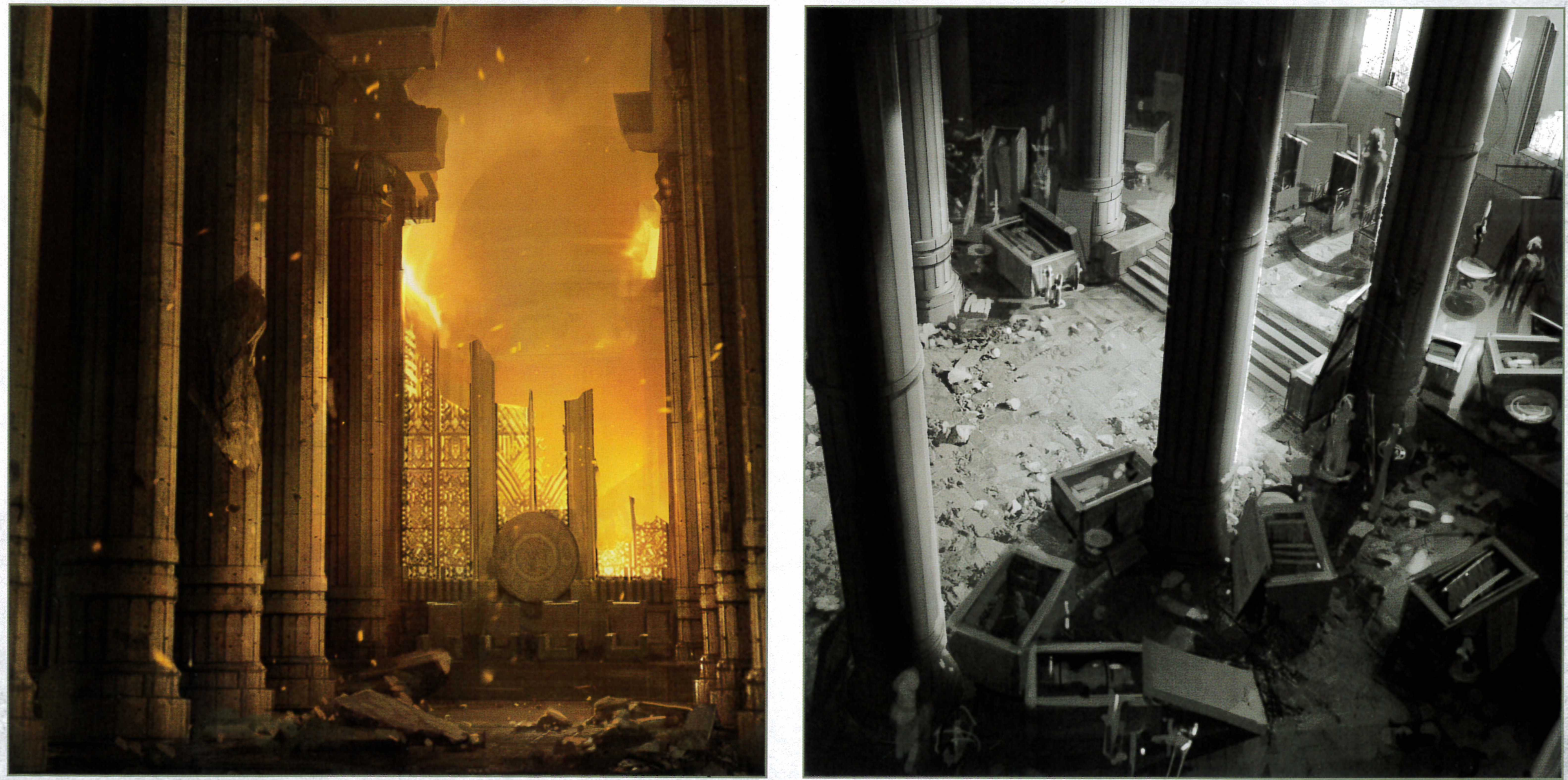






▲ In progress and final vfx shot of Noble, Cassius and their entourage of Priests in the throne room.

▼ Concept art for the ruined citadel throne room.

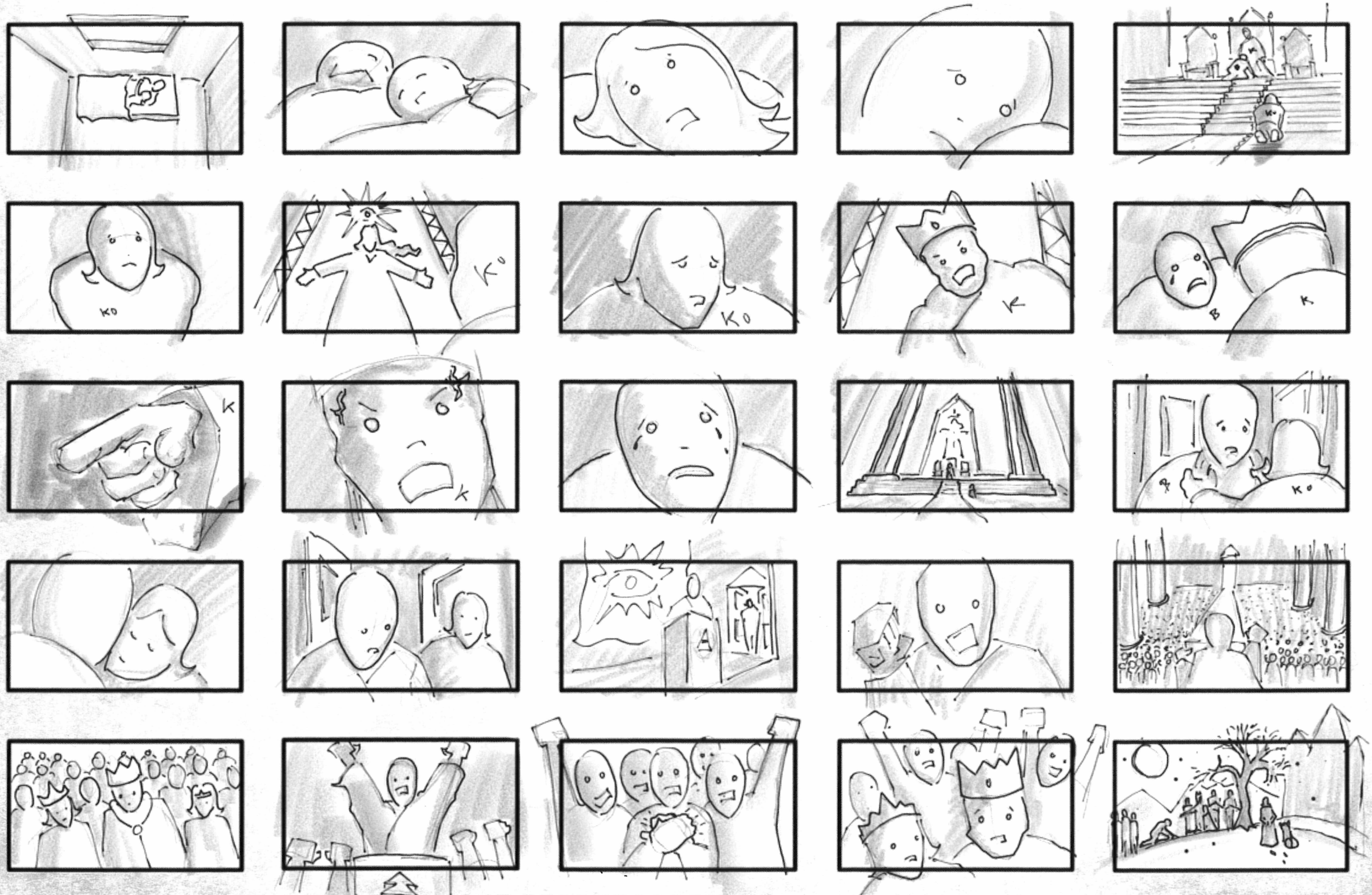


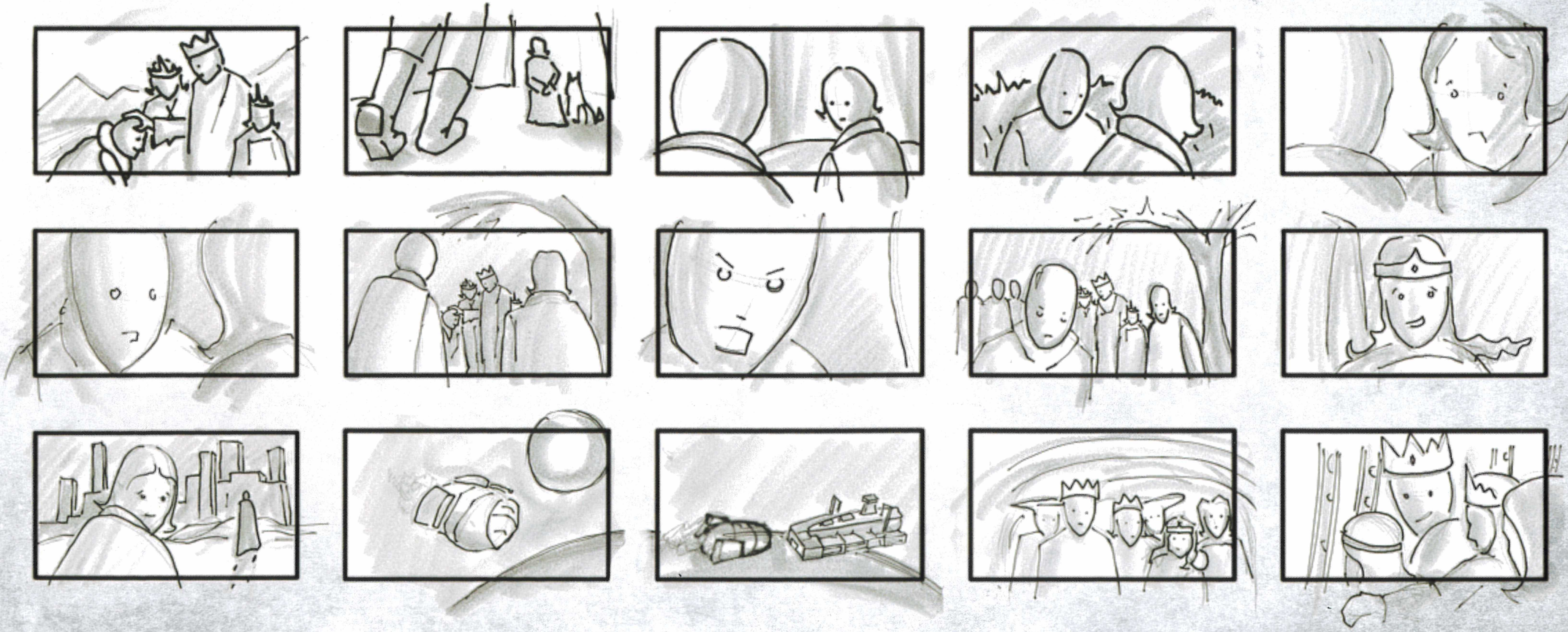
ASSASSINATION OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

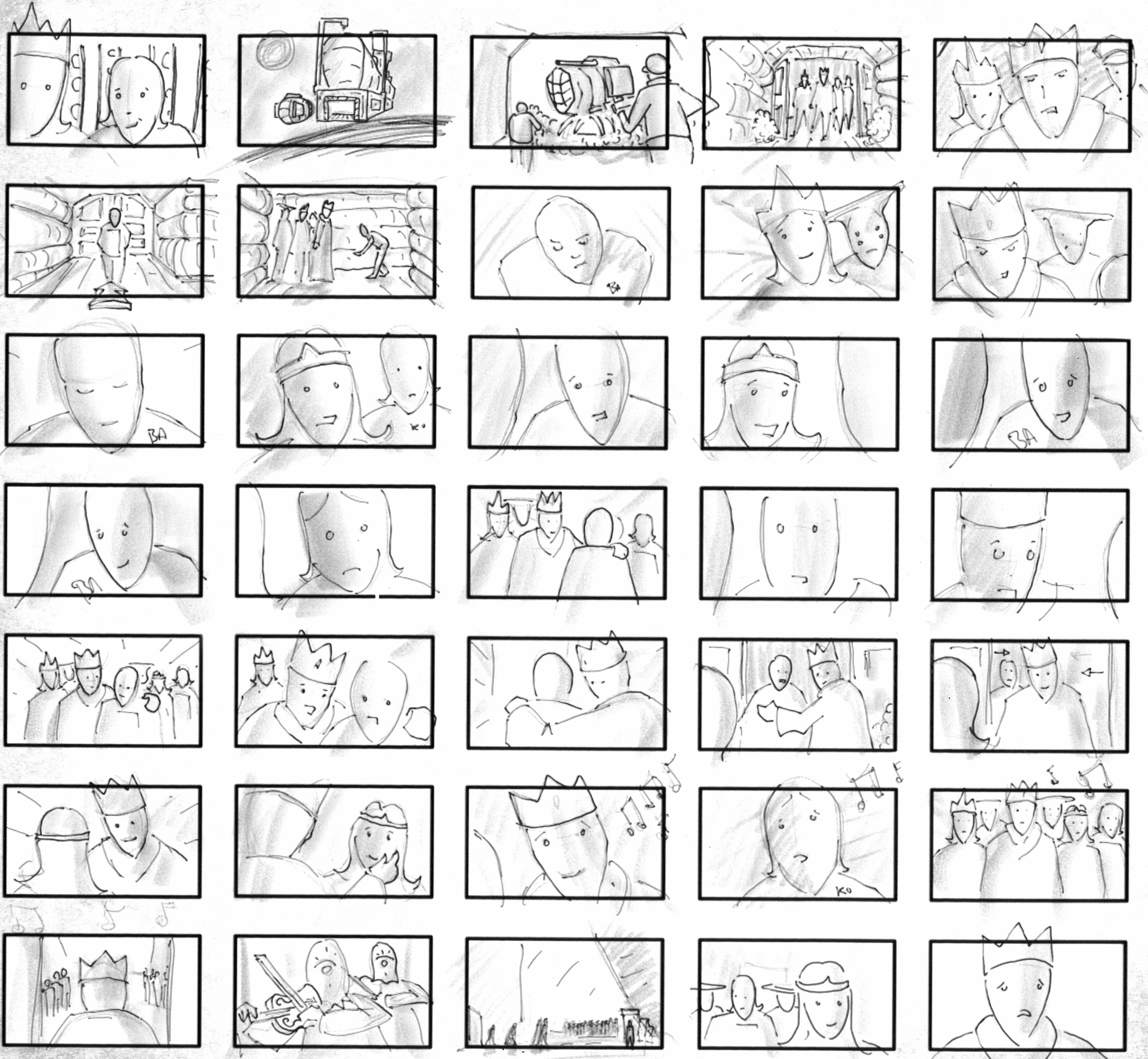
THIS IS THE KEY EVENT in Kora's backstory that she is loath to recount even to her closest allies: how she was tricked into betraying and murdering the one person she was sworn to protect. It was a plan of overweening ambition that was years in the making. "Balisarius is worried about the young princess, Issa, because she's pretty open about the fact that when she's in charge she's going to dismantle the war machine and put an end to the colonial concept that has been the economic and political driver of the Motherworld," Snyder explains. "So, in this sequence, Balisarius has told Kora, 'We're going to get rid of the royal family, and then everything's going to be okay. We'll restore order and everything will be just fine. Just trust me on this. I got you.' Then basically what happens is they do assassinate the royal family, but Balisarius—it was always his plan to blame Kora for the events, because she's an off-worlder and very much sacrifice-able to the objective of Balisarius going forward as Regent and eventually as Emperor."

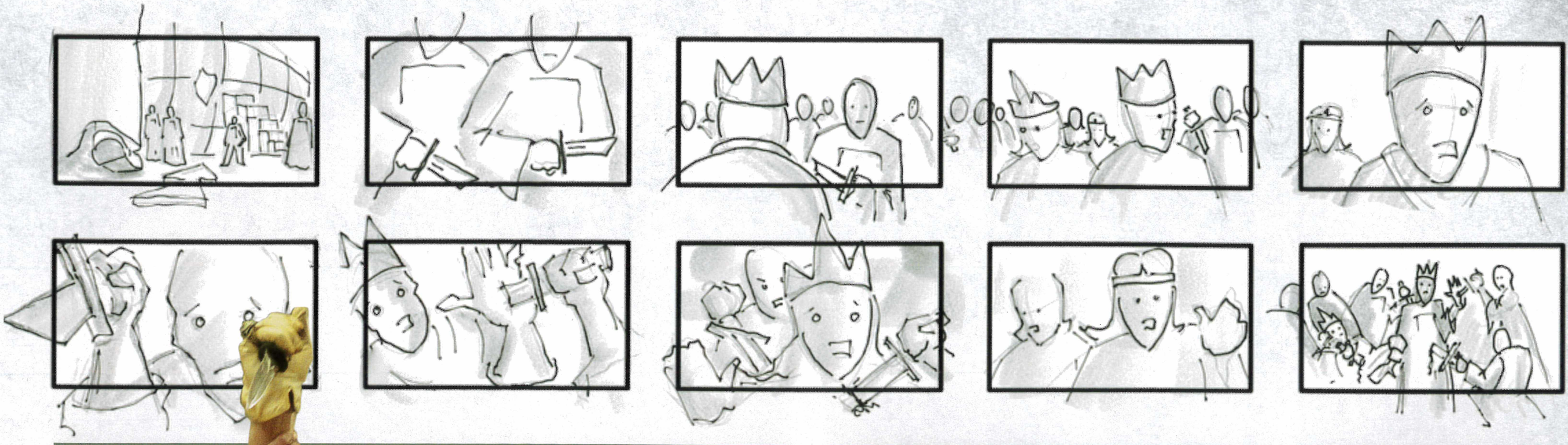
Snyder admits that it was a dangerous dance to load his main character up with such a heinous past and risk alienating the audience,

▶ In progress and final visual effects shots of the royal family meeting emissaries under the windswept tree at their country estate.

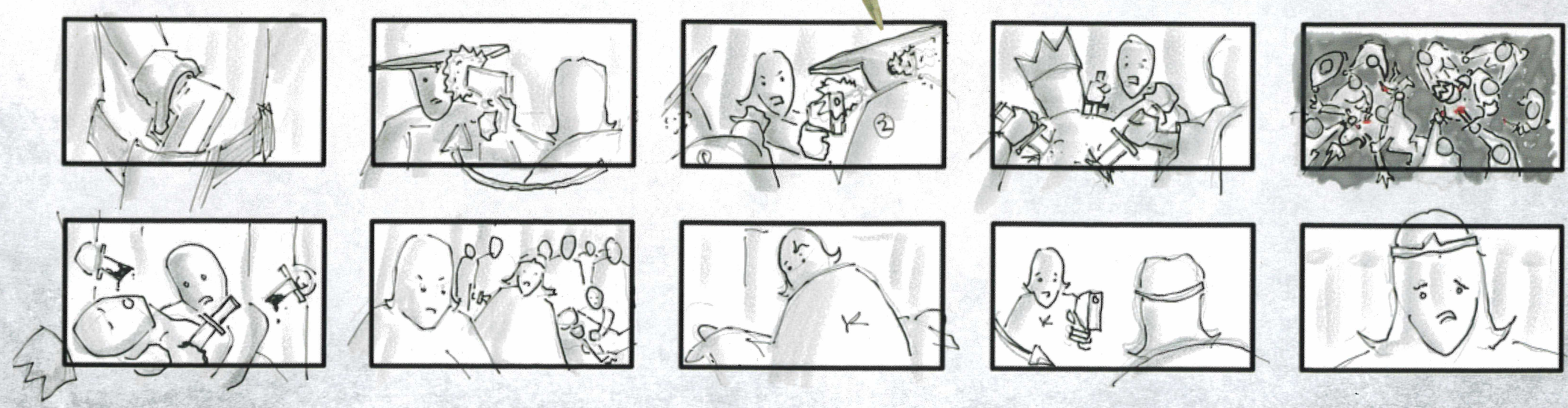


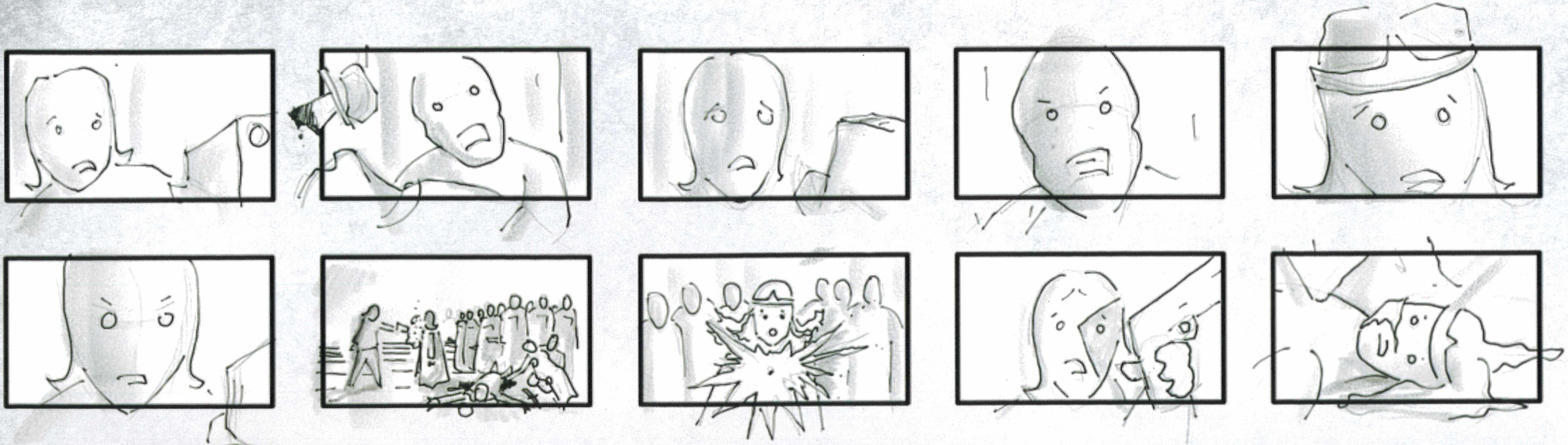


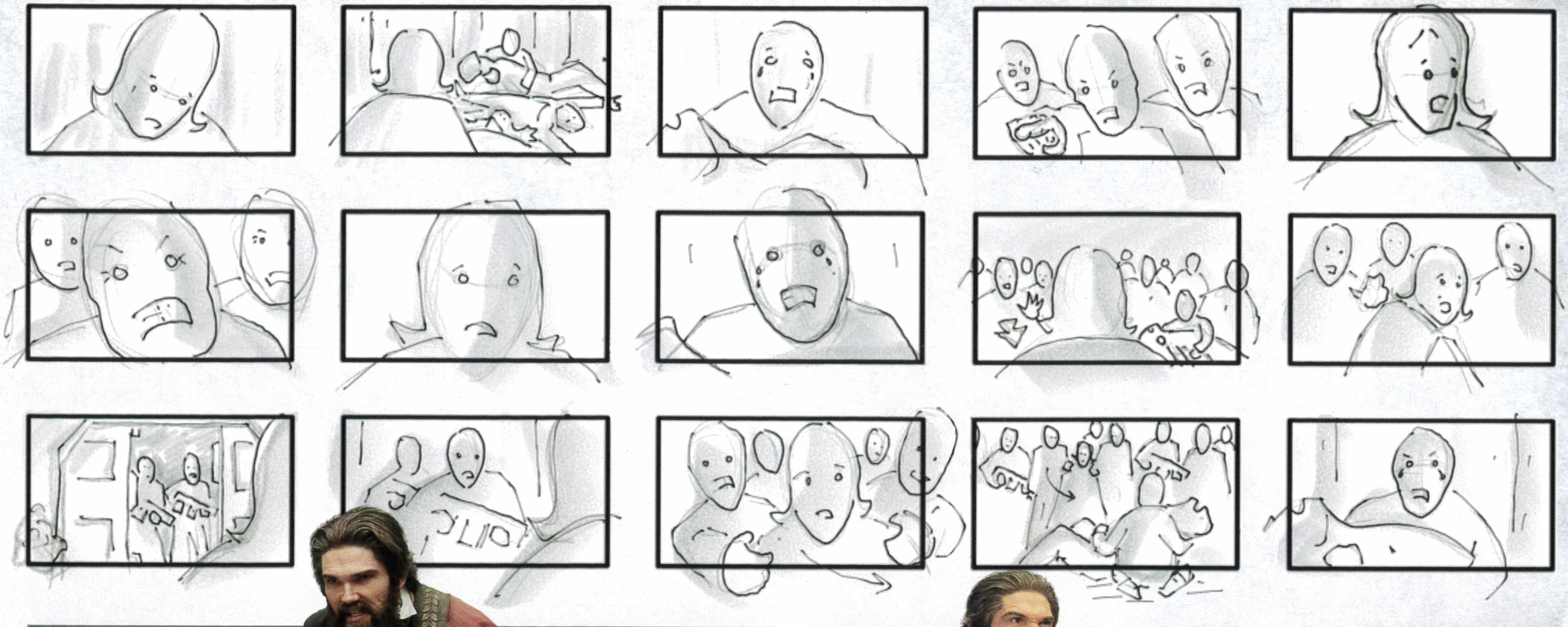

BA
BA
KO
BA
BA
KO



▲ Balisarius (Fra Fee) kills the King.







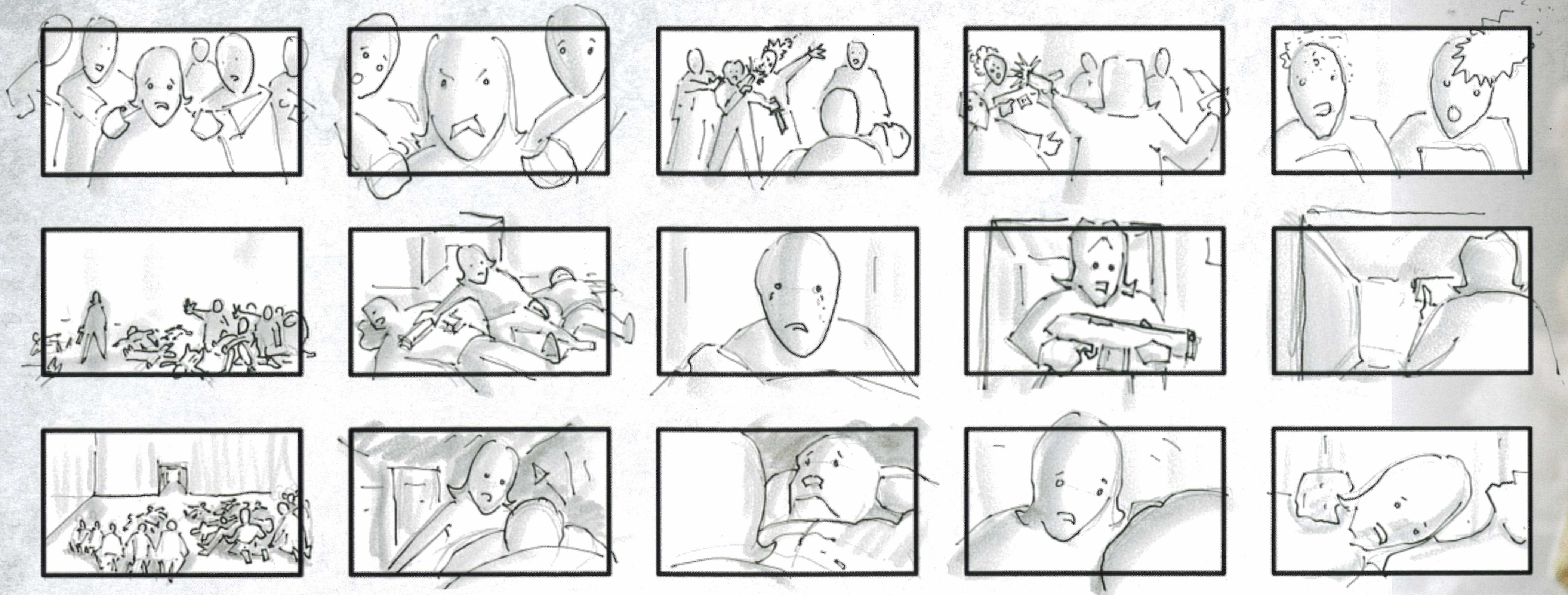
but knowing when to reveal this information was key to maintaining empathy for her. "We're learning what Kora is capable of in her darkest moments. It's pretty much an act that, if we'd maybe seen it in scene one of the movie, I don't know how keen we would have been to follow Kora through her adventures. But she's been on a path of redemption, looking for forgiveness," he says.

The assassination itself takes place in the engine room of what was planned to be the last dreadnought-class heavy cruiser to be built. Lured there ostensibly to dedicate the Kali drive system, the royal family is ruthlessly cut down by Balisarius and a cadre of traitorous senators, while a hooded string quartet plays an adagio. Kora reluctantly fulfills her part in the coup by gunning down Issa—but not before the angelic girl forgives her for this lethal act of betrayal.

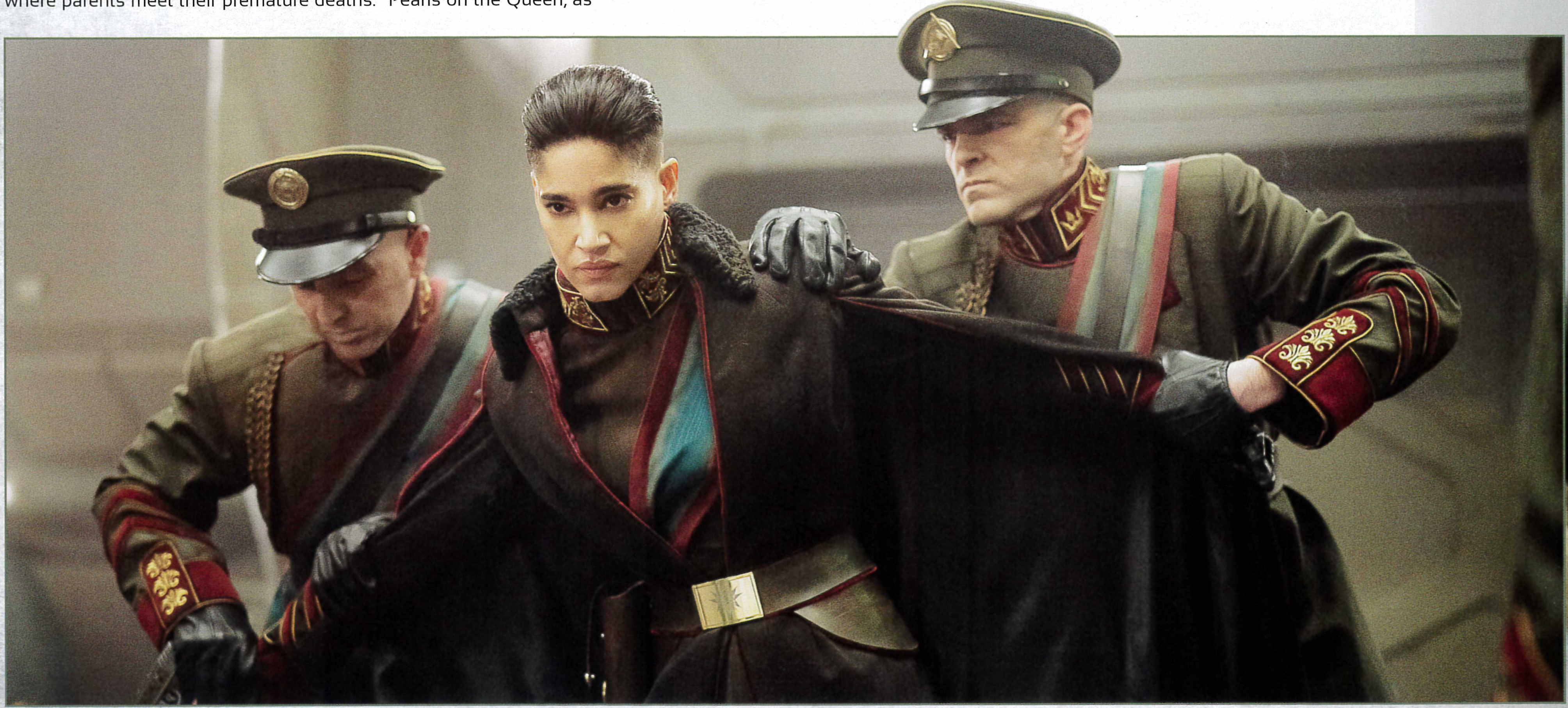
How the scene was shot added extra weight to what would be the defining moment of Kora's life and her greatest shame. "I really wanted to try and create this feeling of impending doom, and this feeling of unavoidable death. That's what I was going for," Snyder says. "At the beginning of the sequence, it's more of a classical, studio, cinematic style, but then it has a bit

▲ Balisarius scapegoats Kora for the assassination of the royal family.

◀ Snyder directs Boutella.



of handheld camerawork in the middle, during the chaos, and then it finds its footing again." Viewers might also notice a certain accessory worn by one of the victims that hearkens back to another Snyder film where parents meet their premature deaths. "Pearls on the Queen, as you do when you're killing mom," he explains. Adding, "But they don't spill across the floor. We considered it, but then I said, 'You know, it's too much.' In the director's cut, they get washed with blood."



▼ Kora is seized by Imperium Guards (Charles Froelich and Justin Price) on Balisarius's order.

▲ Snyder wields 2 prop guns as he directs on set, with Rhian Rees as the Queen, Fee, and Elwes in the background.

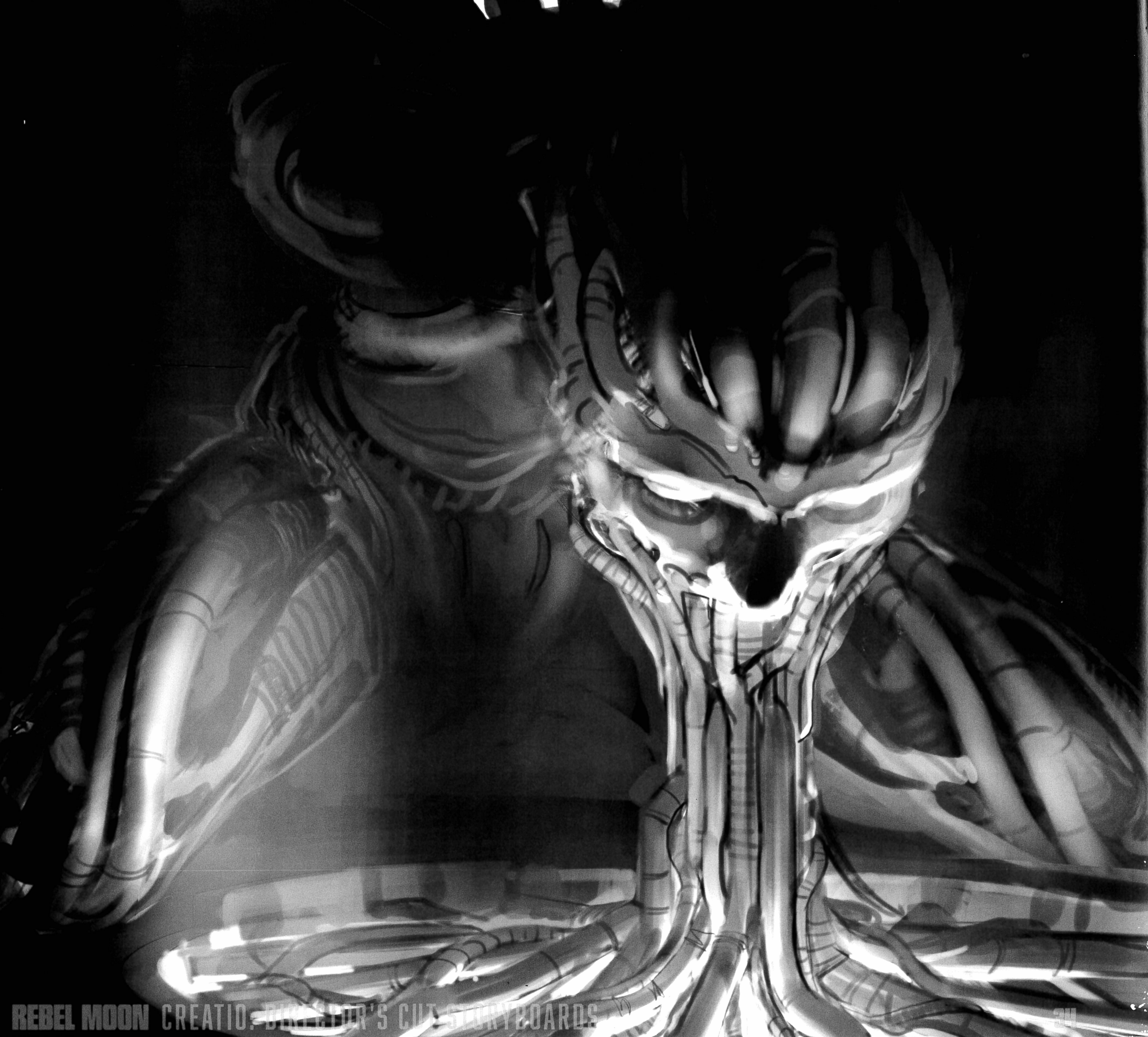
ROYAL FAMILY PORTRAITURE

In the spirit of 'advanced technology meets archaic artisanship' that pervades the *Rebel Moon* universe, Snyder commissioned glass-plate photographs of the royal family for use in the films. For this he turned to friend, ArtCenter classmate, and longtime collaborator Stephen Berkman, who has produced works for films such as *Cold Mountain* (2003), *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016), *Wonder Woman* (2017), and *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2023). Using a wet-colloid process from the very earliest days of photography, Berkman's evocative images are the quintessential blend of science and art. "There's this weird alchemy in it, whenever you do a glass-plate photograph," Snyder says.

Harnessing that alchemy lent gravitas to the rulers of the Motherworld and the mythic aura that surrounds them. "We talked about the royal family, and how we were using what I would say is analog technology over digital. That gives the royal family a more timeless quality than, say, some sci-fi movie 3D hologram that they carry around on a little thing that floats out of their hands," Snyder says. The priests that follow Admiral Noble obviously place great importance on this form of tactile memorabilia, as seen by the haunting portrait of the slain Princess Issa, with its frame comprised of the teeth of the conquered, that they always carry. The macabre appearance of this image was no accident. "When you photograph someone over this long exposure, they get this kind of dead look about them," Snyder explains. "When you look at the picture of Issa, she looks like a corpse, which I think is right for the concept."

Elwes watches in fascination as photographer Stephen Berkman and set dresser Tom Stepanovich check the results of Berkman's work (left).

◀ The royal family, with the princess's dog, pose for official photographs.

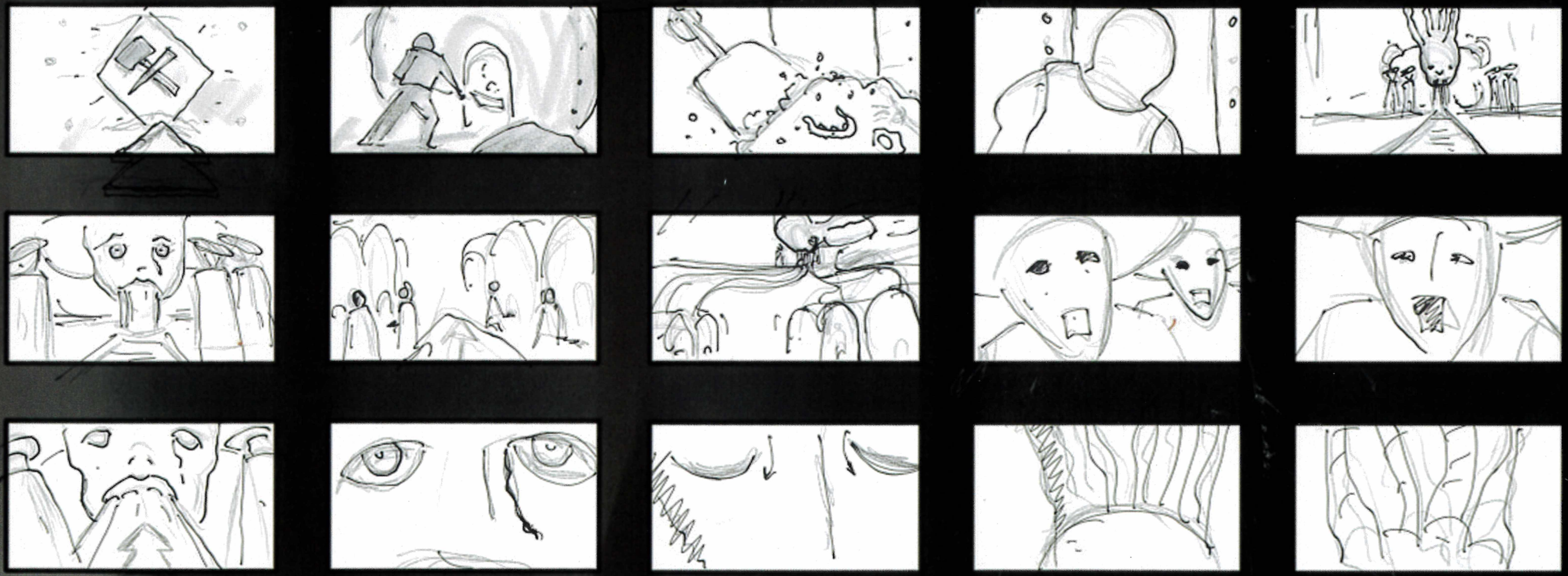


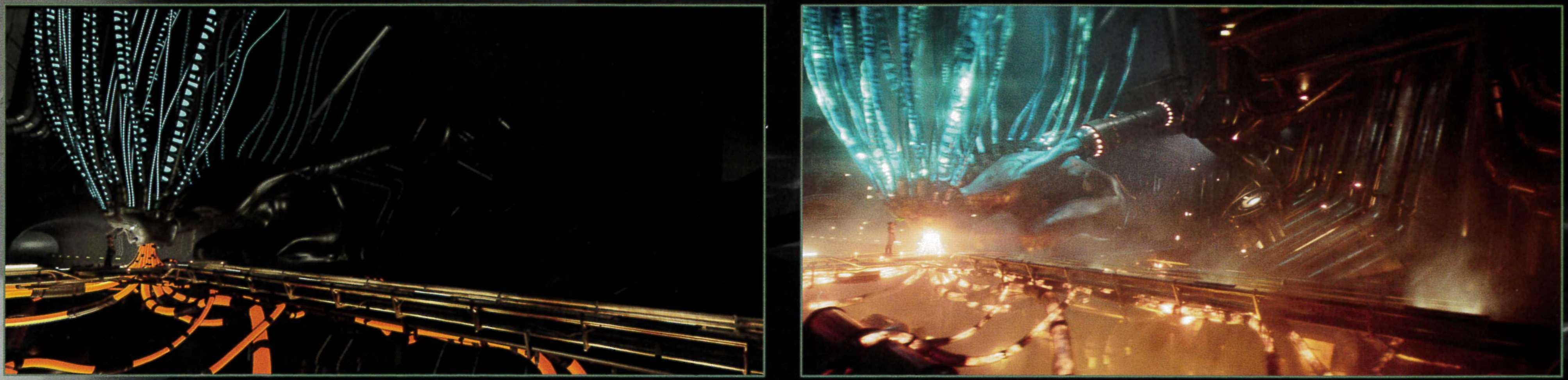
THE PASSING OF A RU KALI

DEEP WITHIN the heart of every Motherworld dreadnought lies the engine room. Here sweating crewmen endlessly shovel "organic matter"—VFX added human skeletal remains for the director's cut—into roaring blast furnaces, evidently feeding into an engine above that is shaped like a steel woman fifty feet tall. But this woman is not allowed to stand proudly upright; she is cowed and forced to kneel in a posture of submission. While many members of the ship's company might pass through the engineering spaces on a daily basis, few know that encased in that metallic effigy is a powerful living being from another dimension—a Ru Kali. More akin to a goddess than a mundane creature, the Ru Kali possesses the ability to distort space and time, and thus, with great effort, travel vast distances across the universe nearly instantaneously. Once the Motherworld unlocked the secrets of how to trap and control the Ru Kalis, its fleets and armies have proved to be unstoppable. No world is beyond their reach.

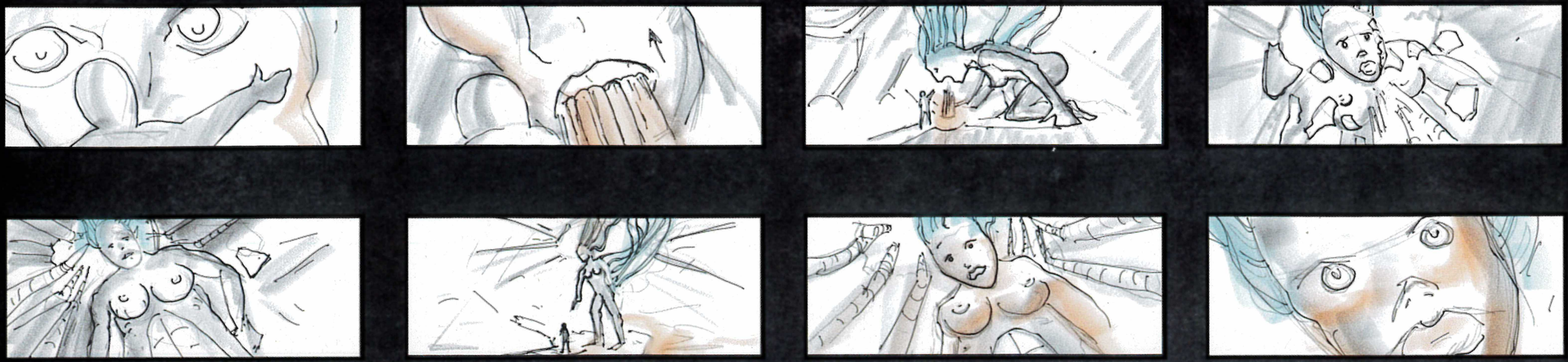
One individual who is intimately familiar with the Ru Kalis and how they operate is Kora, who spent five years training aboard a dreadnought

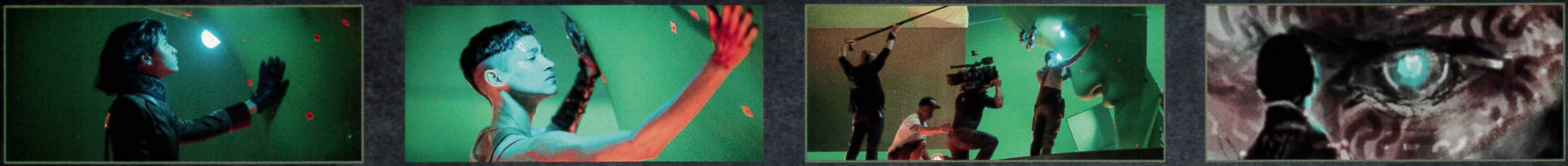
◀ Concept art for an engine room Ru Kali.

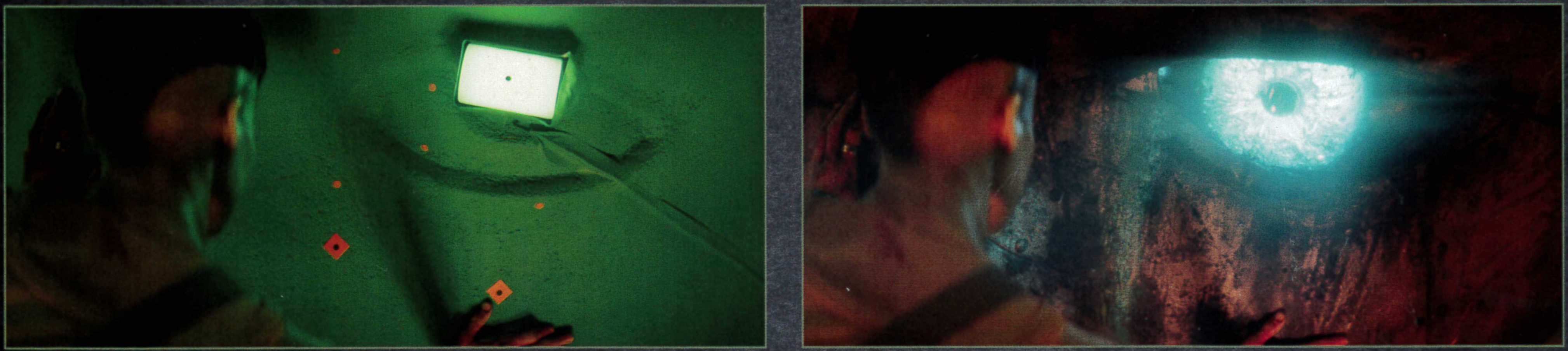




▼ In progress and final visual effects shot of Kora and a Ru Kali.





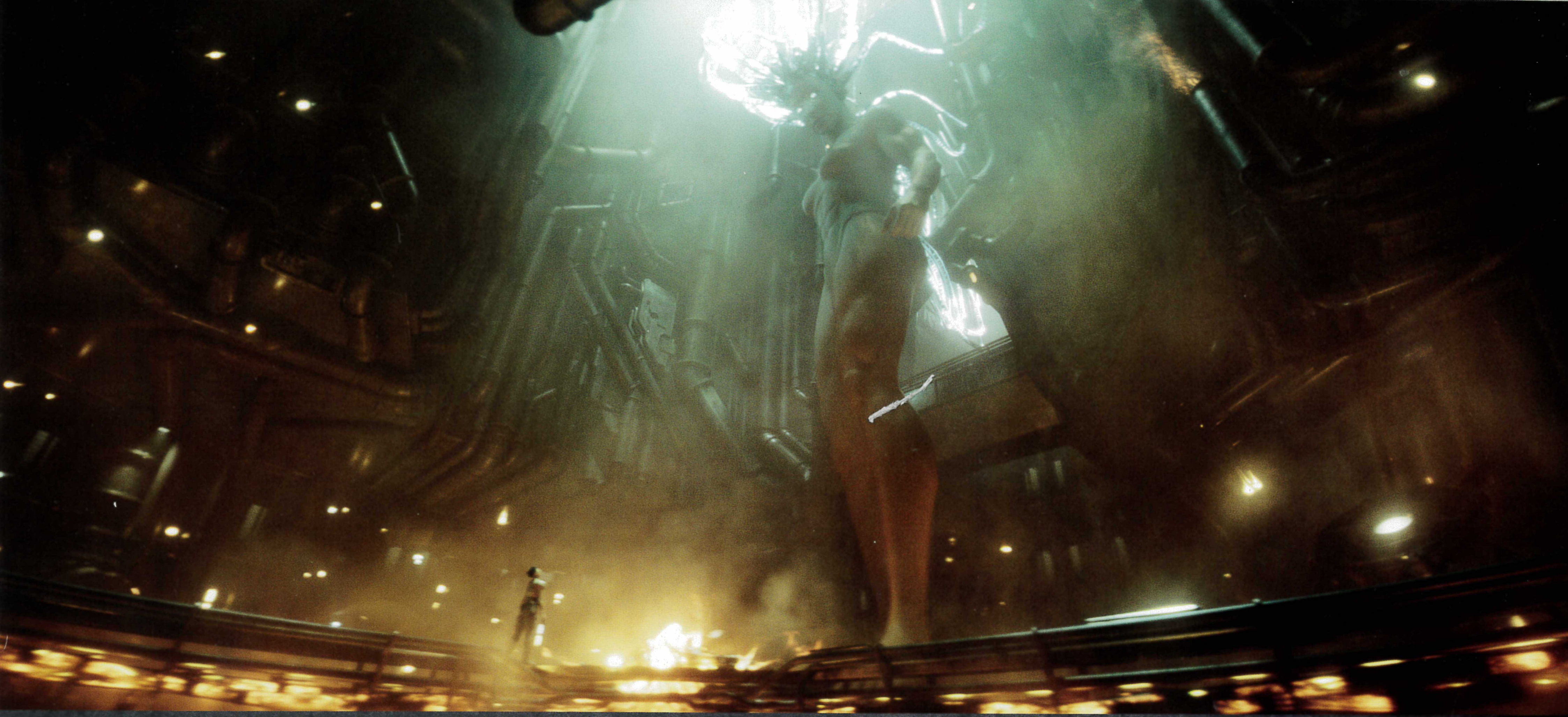


under the tutelage of Balisarius. So, during the Battle of Veldt, when she sneaks into the engine room of *The King's Gaze* in order to plant explosive charges, she knows exactly where to place them to do the most damage and cripple the warship: the head of the Ru Kali herself. It is an action reminiscent of the killing of Princess Issa, where Kora once again is forced to end the life of an innocent in order to accomplish that which she believes to be for the greater good. The decision clearly weighs heavily on her, and in the extended version of the second film she experiences a curious break from reality while doing the deed. The Ru Kali seemingly rears up as if she has broken free and thrown off her fetters; she speaks for the first time, addressing Kora in the common language, forgiving her for what she's doing, and revealing to her a future where Kora is instrumental in ending the subjugation of the Ru Kalis once and for all. Then, just as quickly as it began, the reverie ends. The Ru Kali is back kneeling where it has always been, silently awaiting the countdown to oblivion.

Was the Ru Kali actually speaking with Kora, or was this fleeting episode merely a trick of Kora's imagination? Did the Ru Kali appear in a form that Kora would understand, or did Kora subconsciously choose her form? "You can think about it in two ways," Snyder explains. "Kora clearly has some sort of bond with the Ru Kali, because in the director's cut of movie one you hear her say that she would sneak off and go down to the engine room and sometimes hang out with the Kali, and sometimes it would look at her. Now, that's not the same Kali, because it's a different ship, but there is some sort of kindred spirit. You could think about it in one way, as, 'Oh yeah, the Ru Kali is communicating with Kora and letting her off the hook,' because she says, 'One day you'll release my sisters, and their wrath will be my vengeance,' and Kora has no way of knowing that. But also, there is an argument that it's Kora's guilt over killing another thing she loves causing her to have this weird vision. I think both are acceptable readings of what happened." Like all art, the interpretation of the scene is ultimately up to the viewer.

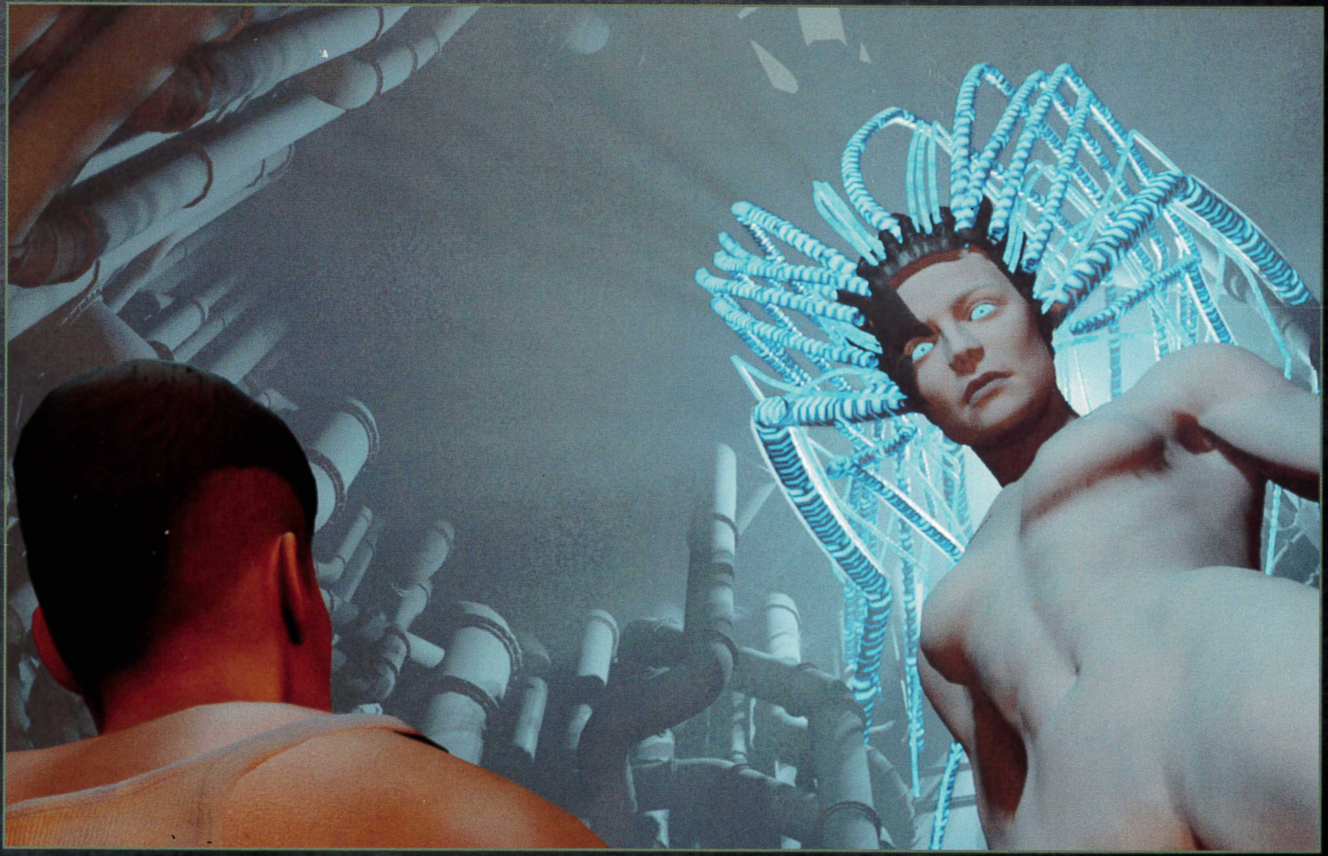
▲▲ (left to right) Filming Teenage Kora (Lila Barad) with a Ru Kali on the green screen set. Kora prepares to plant explosive charges on the head of the Ru Kali. Filming Kora and the Ru Kali. Concept art of Kora and the Ru Kali regarding each other.

▲ In progress and final visual effects shot of Kora and the Ru Kali regarding each other.



▼ In progress 3D model of a Ru Kali.

▲▼ Final shot of Kora and an unfettered Ru Kali, and an in progress shot from the same sequence.



'KALI'S LAMENT'

She will walk in gardens
[la-ge.nwo tye: fwe.ran.so]

She will lie beneath the trees
[la-taera tye: gil.dan ae.le:]

She will mend what has been broken
[la-hina tye yumbye: te.shan]

Wild woman, fierce and free
[ae.nya, vrjun, kye: li:he:]

I will be free
[la-da yae: kye:]

Know I am not forgotten
[gidu: yae: dav-nyo]

Though in shackled chains I dwell
[hi:nyav yae: kye.luw]

And I serve ungrateful demons
[li pwom yae: she.vyo tae.lon]

In the furnaces of hell
[wen.dan.so ae.ki::luw]

She will walk in gardens
[la-ge.nwo tye: fwe.ran.so]

She will lie beneath the trees
[la-taera tye: gil.dan ae.le:]

She will mend what has been broken
[la-hina tye yumbye: te.shan]

Wild woman, fierce and free
[ae.nya, vrjun, kye: li:he:]

I will be free
[la-da yae: kye:]

Know I am not forgotten
[gidu: yae: dav-nyo]

Fiery gospels I have seen
[fye.dwan yae: ki:tyu ash.to]

And though monsters hold me captive
[li pwa.ro me::yem.ben dyon wil.tan yae:l]

There is vengeance in my dreams
[da sidi ne:shan fyi.dan.yae::so]

She will walk in gardens
[la-ge.nwo tye: fwe.ran.so]

She will lie beneath the trees
[la-taera tye: gil.dan ae.le:]

She will mend what has been broken
[la-hina tye yumbye: te.shan]

Wild woman, fierce and free
[ae.nya, vrjun, kye: li:he:]

I will be free
[la-da yae: kye:]

Know I am not forgotten
[gidu: yae: dav-nyo]

Though enslaved I make my mark
[pwa.ro i::nyo.ra bin.dyu yae: him.a-yae:]

Etched on burnished blades of steel
[shi-kyi.an vin.swo.ra ba.li:n tyi.hen.si]

There is a child in my heart
[da sidi nyu.hal-yae:-so ae.da.lae:]

She will walk in gardens
[la-ge.nwo tye: fwe.ran.so]

She will lie beneath the trees
[la-taera tye: gil.dan ae.le:]

She will mend what has been broken
[la-hina tye yu.mbye: te.shan]

Wild woman, fierce and free
[ae.nya, vrjun, kye: li:he:]

I will be free
[la-da yae: kye:]

I'll walk in gardens
[la-ge.nwo yae: fwe.ran.so]

I will be she
[la-da yae: tye]

Wild, wild woman
[ae.nya, ae.nya. li:he:]

CREATING THE LANGUAGE OF THE RU KALI

To develop the language of the goddess-like Ru Kalis—as with all of the foreign and alien languages heard in the Rebel Moon films—the filmmakers relied on the skills of linguist Christine Schreyer, PhD, an associate professor of anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus. The considerable task before her was actually twofold: Not only did this language need to be something actors might potentially speak, but it also had to be well suited for producing a melodious song (see below). This involved not merely coming up with pleasant sounding words, but building a working language that possessed its own logical grammar and syntax, as well.

"Sounds for this language were chosen based on conversations with Zack Snyder," Schreyer explains. "For the Ru Kali language, I drew on references to the purpose of the Ru Kali as vessels of war and fortune. I also drew on the language of Irish Gaelic, ancient Viking funeral songs, and the performance of the song by Rose Betts, an Irish singer. As the initial purpose of the language is that it be sung, we decided to make sure the vowels stay strong so the lyrics can be sung easily, with more melodic consonant-vowel syllables. French was also included as a possible sound influence—the sounds of Irish and French overlap considerably. The sentence structure of Kali is V(erb) S(ubject) O(bject), as the Ru Kali are those that predict the future, an action focus, so the verb or action word comes first; this is also the sentence structure of Irish Gaelic."

KALI PHONOLOGY - CONSONANTS

	BILABIAL	LABIODENTAL	ALVEOLAR	PALATAL-ALVEOLAR	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTTAL
STOPS: VOICELESS, VOICED	pʸ pʷ bʸ bʷ		tʸ tʷ dʸ dʷ			k, g	
NASALS	mʸ mʷ		nʸ nʷ		ɲ (ny)	ŋ (ng)	
FRICATIVES: VOICELESS, VOICED		fʸ fʷ vʸ vʷ	sʷ	ʃ (sh)		x ɣ	h
CENTRAL APPROXIMANTS			ɾʸ ɾʷ (r) lʸ lʷ		j (y)	w	
LATERAL APPROXIMANTS			lʸ lʷ				

VOWELS

FRONT	BACK
i:	u:
ɪ (i)	(u) ʊ
e:	o:
ɛ (e)	(o) ɔ
æ:	a

Long vowels are marked with the symbol [: after the vowel], the vowel without the mark is pronounced as a short vowel.

MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX

In the Kali language, verbs are conjugated to indicate who is speaking. This comes in the form of a suffix added to the root verb. The sentence structure of the Kali language (as noted above) is Verb-Subject-Object and adjectives come before nouns. Tense is also included in verbal conjugations as a prefix to the root-ver. Pronouns and Subject suffixes for verb conjugations:

I = yae:	We = yae:n
You (sg – fem.) = bʷe:	You (pl – fem.) = bʷe:n
They (sg – fem.) = tye:	They (pl - fem.) = tye:n

The 2nd and 3rd person pronouns are perceived as explicitly feminine, as the Kali are goddesses, unless marked as male with the prefix [u-]. The default forms are feminine.

PHONOLOGY NOTES

Syllables have the potential syllable structures of:
CV, CVC, CCV, V, VC

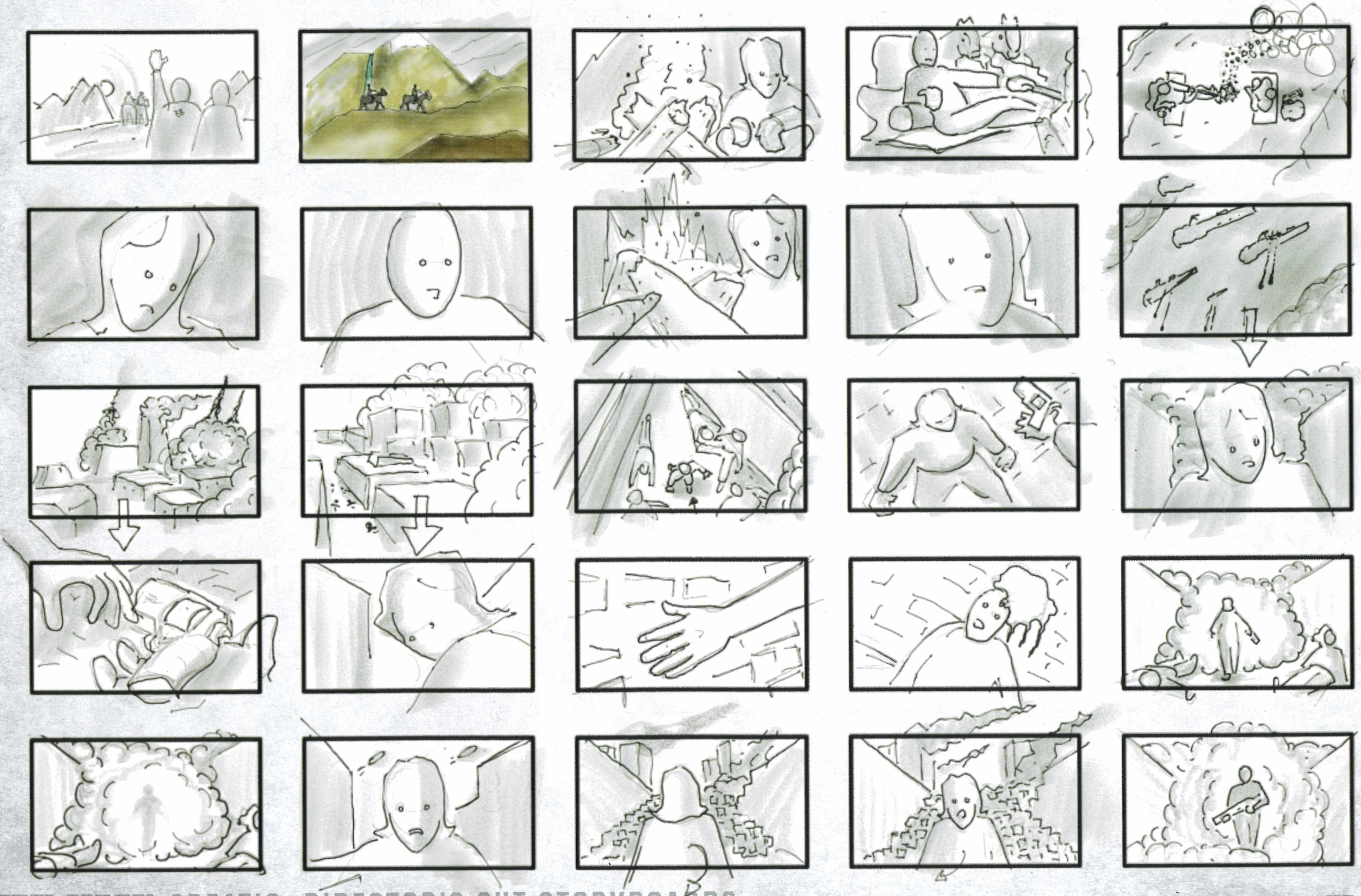
For initial consonant clusters, the stop sounds (p, b, m, t, d, n) start and are followed by a liquid or a nasal (matching Irish Gaelic). The only consonants that can end a syllable are liquids, nasals, or fricatives.

Intonation patterns of sentences = is H-L-MH (to replicate the rising, falling, melodious intonation patterns of Irish Gaelic), where the first syllable of words is stressed.

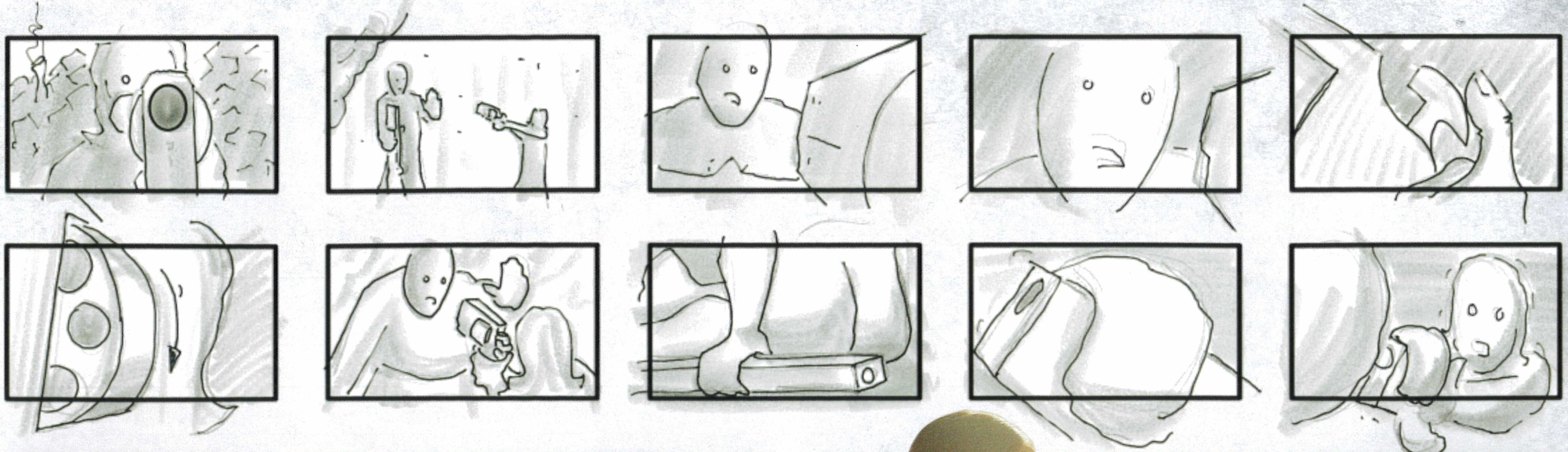
KORA'S BACKSTORY

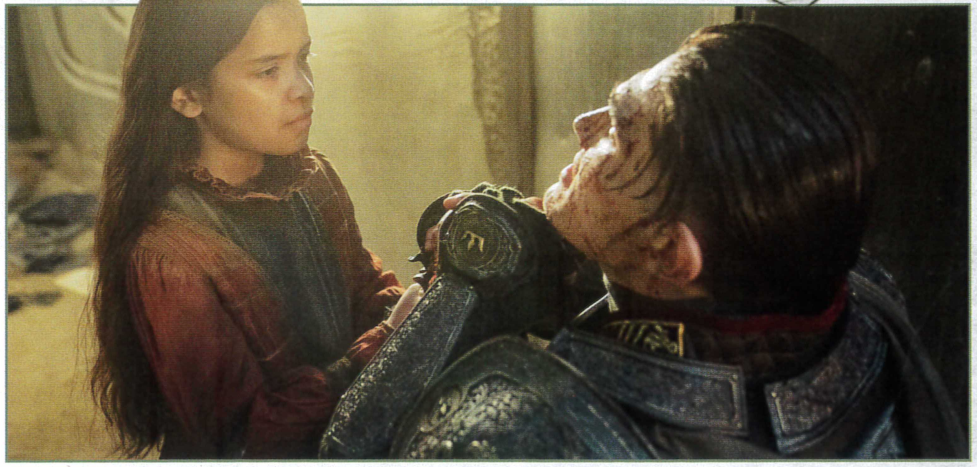
ON THE ROAD TO PROVIDENCE, Kora opens up to Gunnar for the first time about her life before she came to Veldt. Long ago, when she was still a child on her homeworld, dreadnoughts from the Motherworld rained down death from above while its troops executed the surviving populace on the ground. Orphaned and alone, in flashback we see young Kora wander through the burning streets until she finds a gun and turns it on the first soldier she encounters. It turns out to be Balisarius, the general in charge of the invasion. Sensing something about the girl, he tests her by inviting her to pull the trigger. The gun turns out to be empty, of course, and Balisarius takes Kora back with him to his dreadnought. He'll raise and train her himself, for he has grand plans for this girl he renames Arthelais.

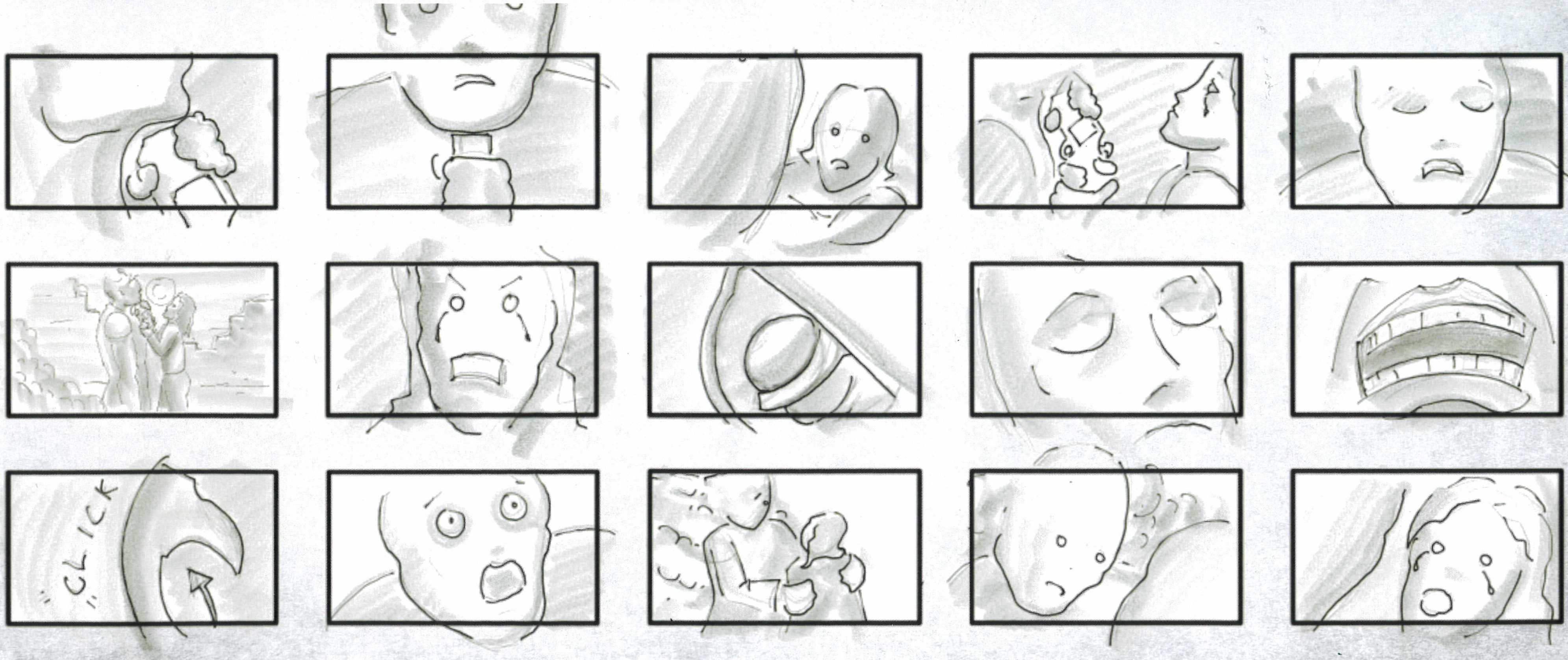
Years later, she is a newly graduated officer chosen to lead an attack against an unseen enemy on a snowy planet. Her lover lies dead on the ground next to her, the first casualty of the landing force from her dropship. Summoning all her courage and her ironclad faith in her cause, Arthelais storms across a battlefield against a hailstorm of incoming fire. In victory she stands atop a ruined bunker, waving the banner of the Motherworld

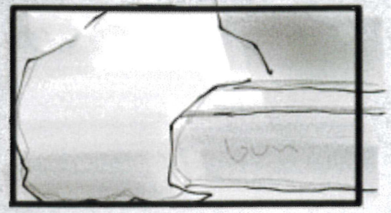
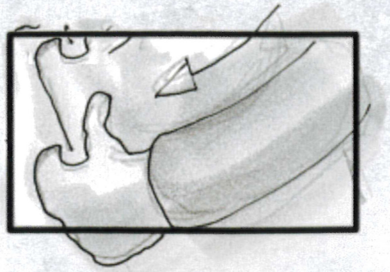
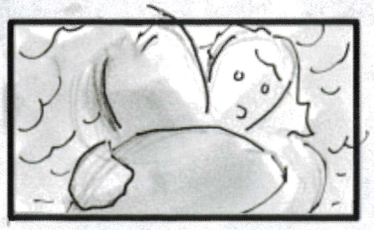
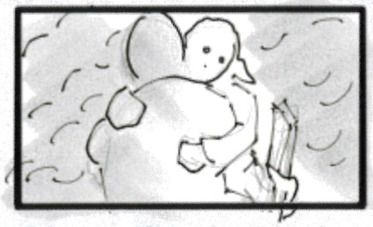
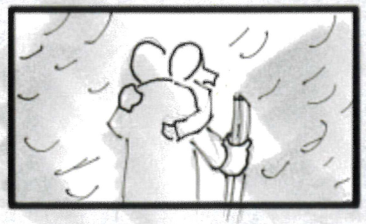
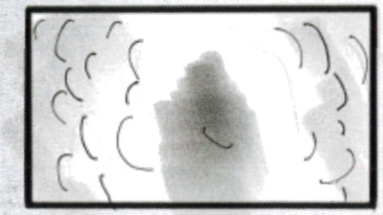
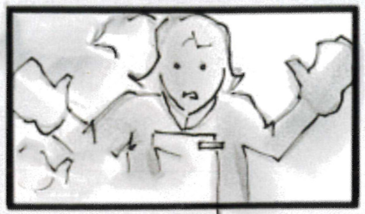
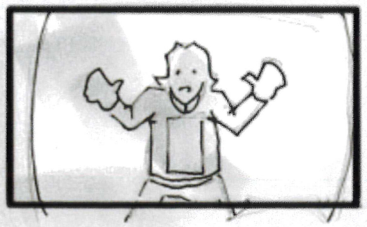
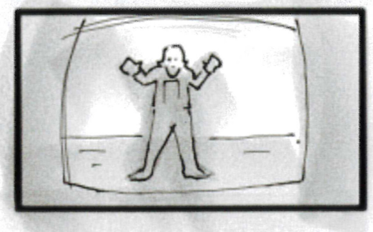
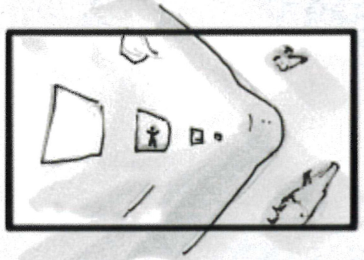


▶ Young Kora evades Motherworld soldiers and Priests then confronts Balisarius on her homeworld.



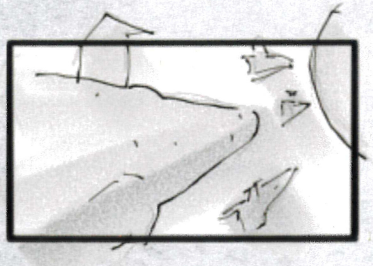
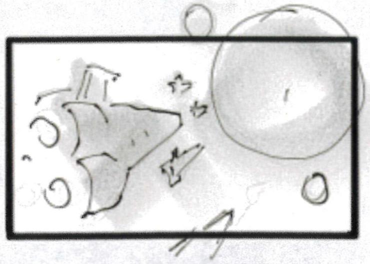
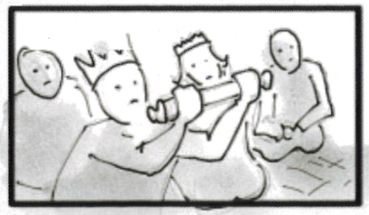
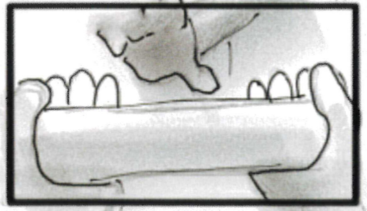
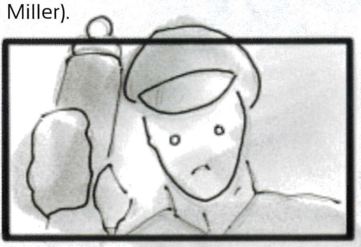
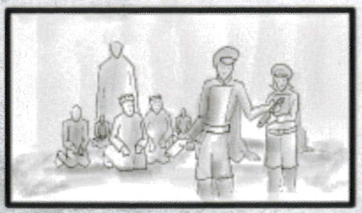
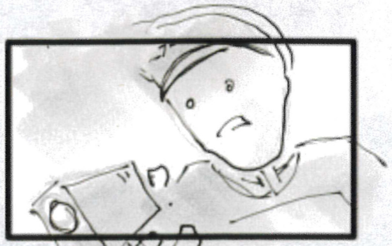
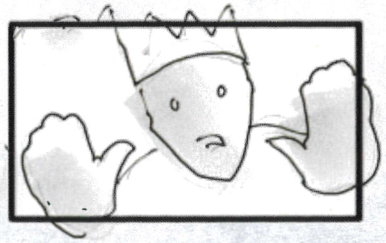
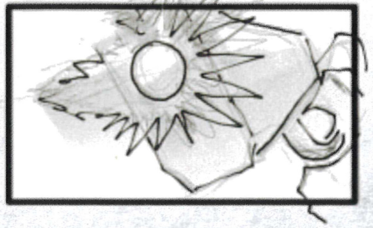
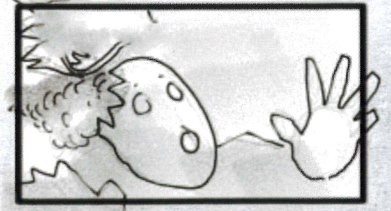


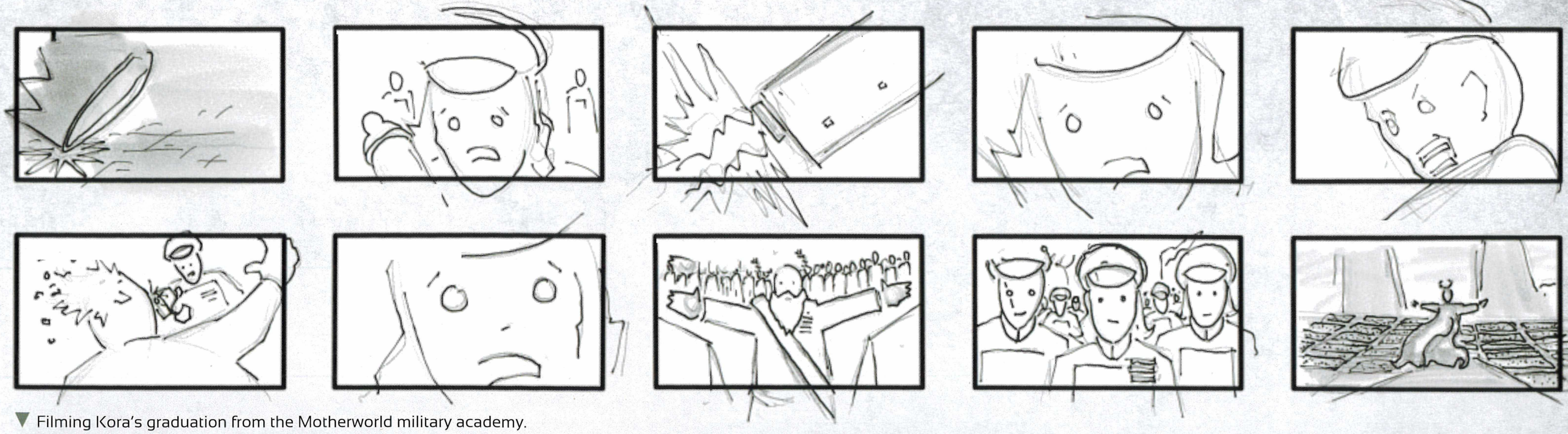

"CLICK"

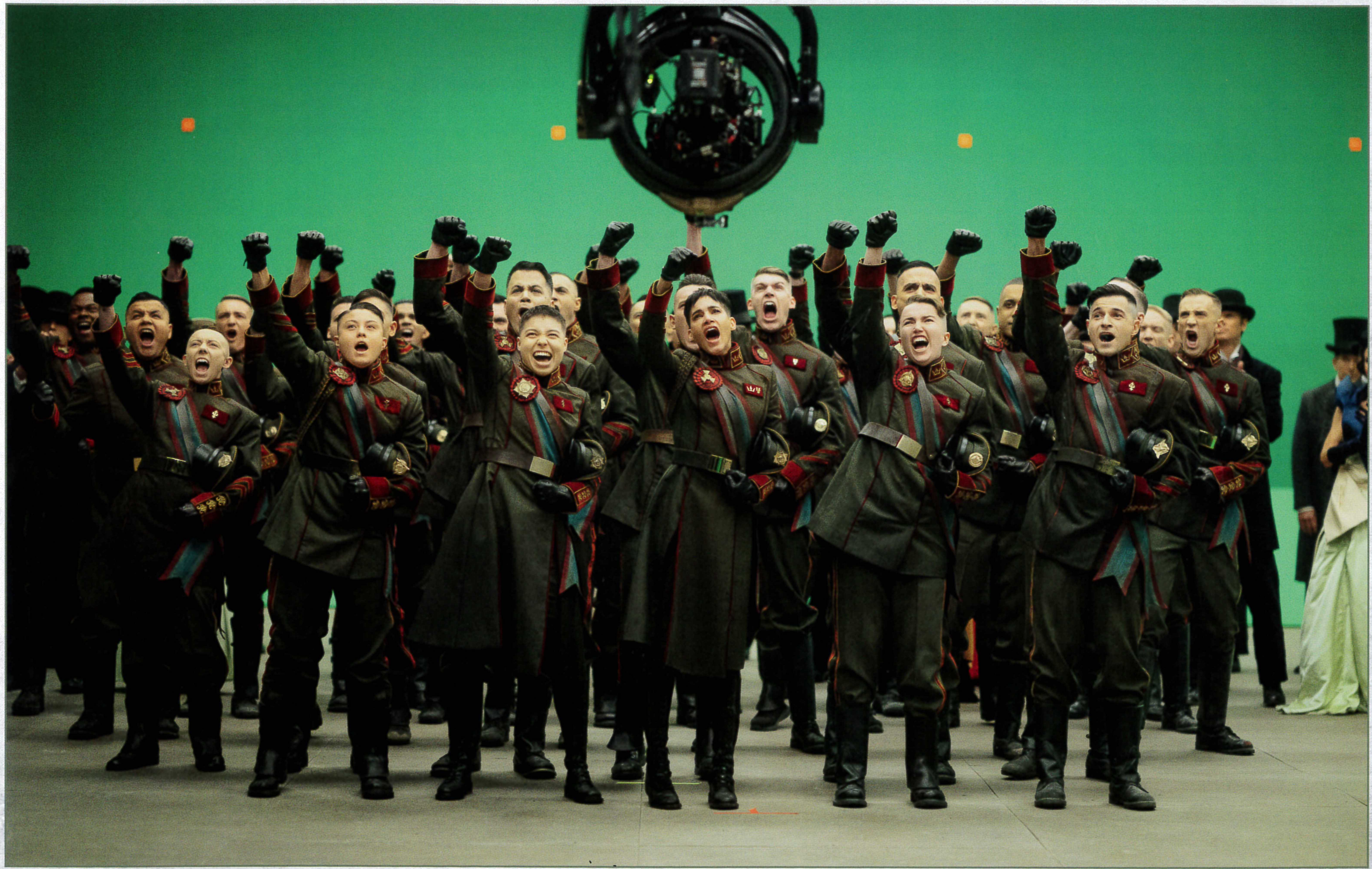
▲ Snyder directs Fee and Martinez on a dreadnought corridor set.

▲ Teenage Kora watches Balisarius subjugate yet another world and prepare to execute its rulers (Peter Chanseyha, Gary Nohealii Neil, Alexya Garcia, and Graydon Miller).

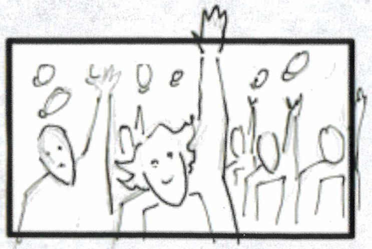











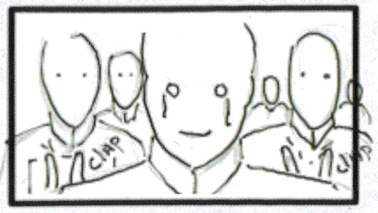


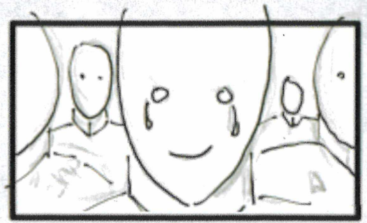
▼ Filming Kora's graduation from the Motherworld military academy.

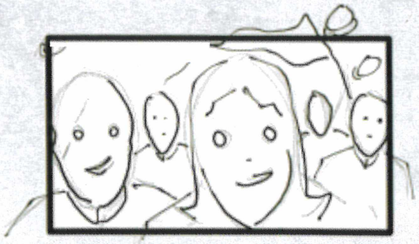


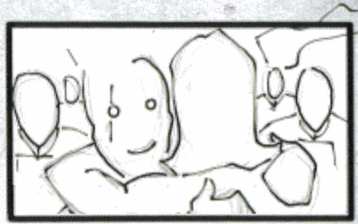
►► Kora and her doomed lover (Rory Gibson).

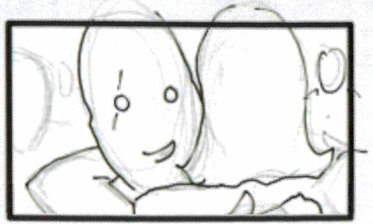


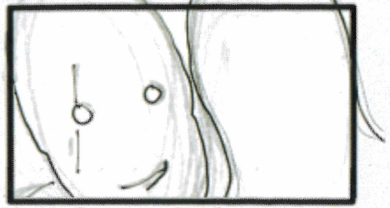

CLAP
CLAP

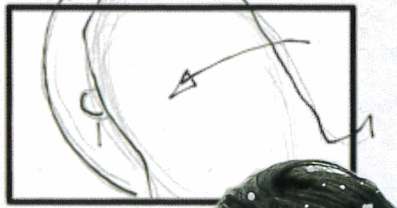


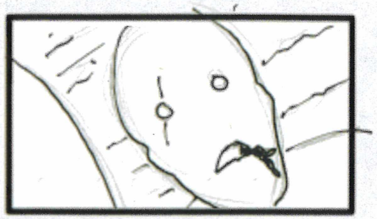


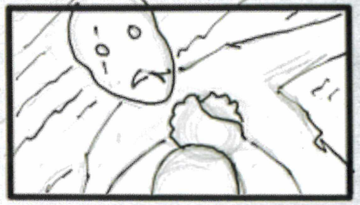


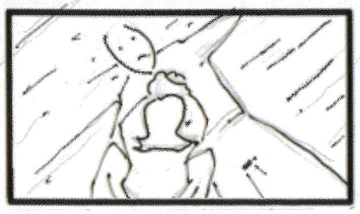


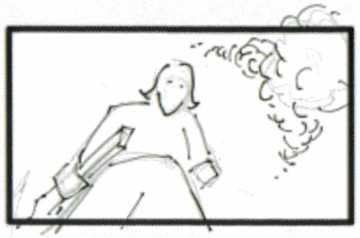


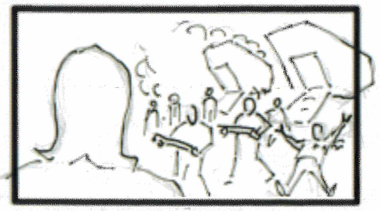


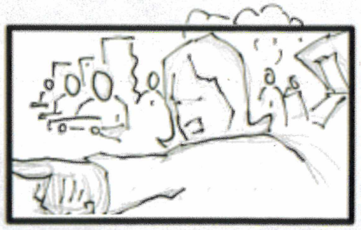


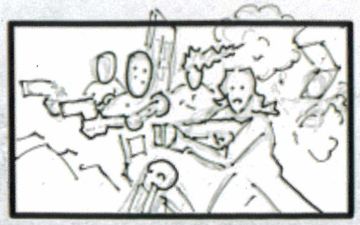


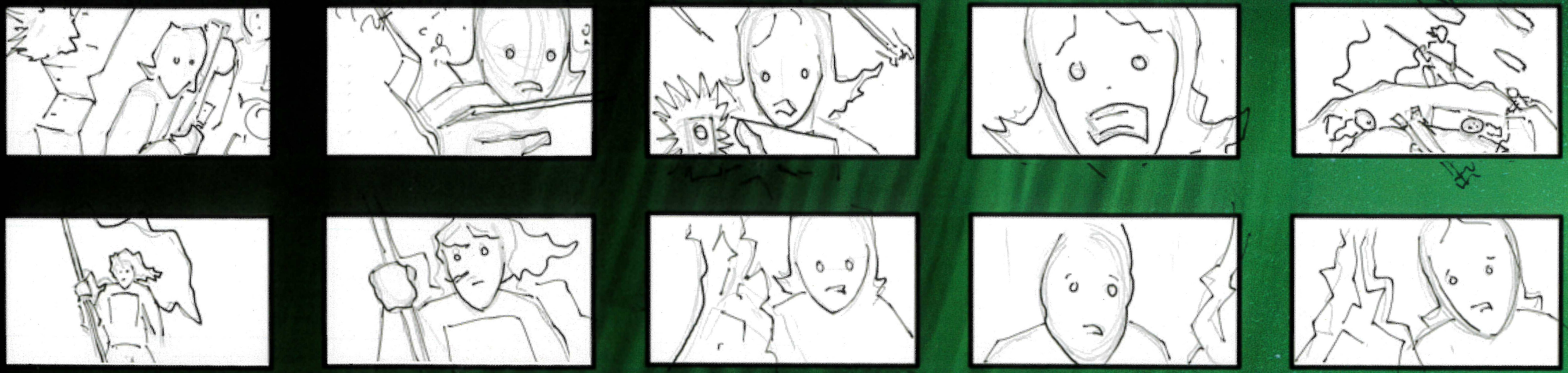












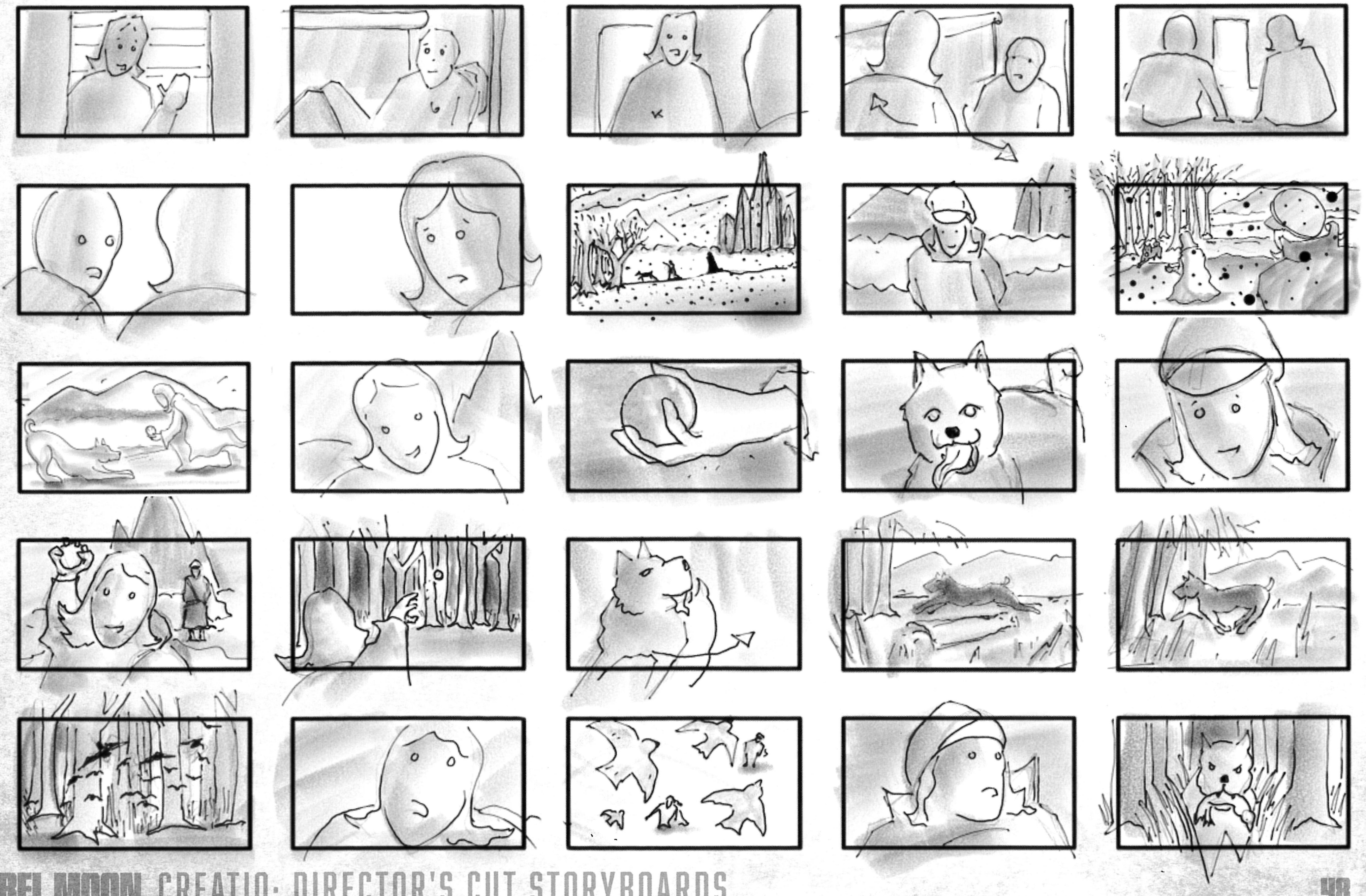
▼▶ Kora leads Motherworld troops to victory for the first time.

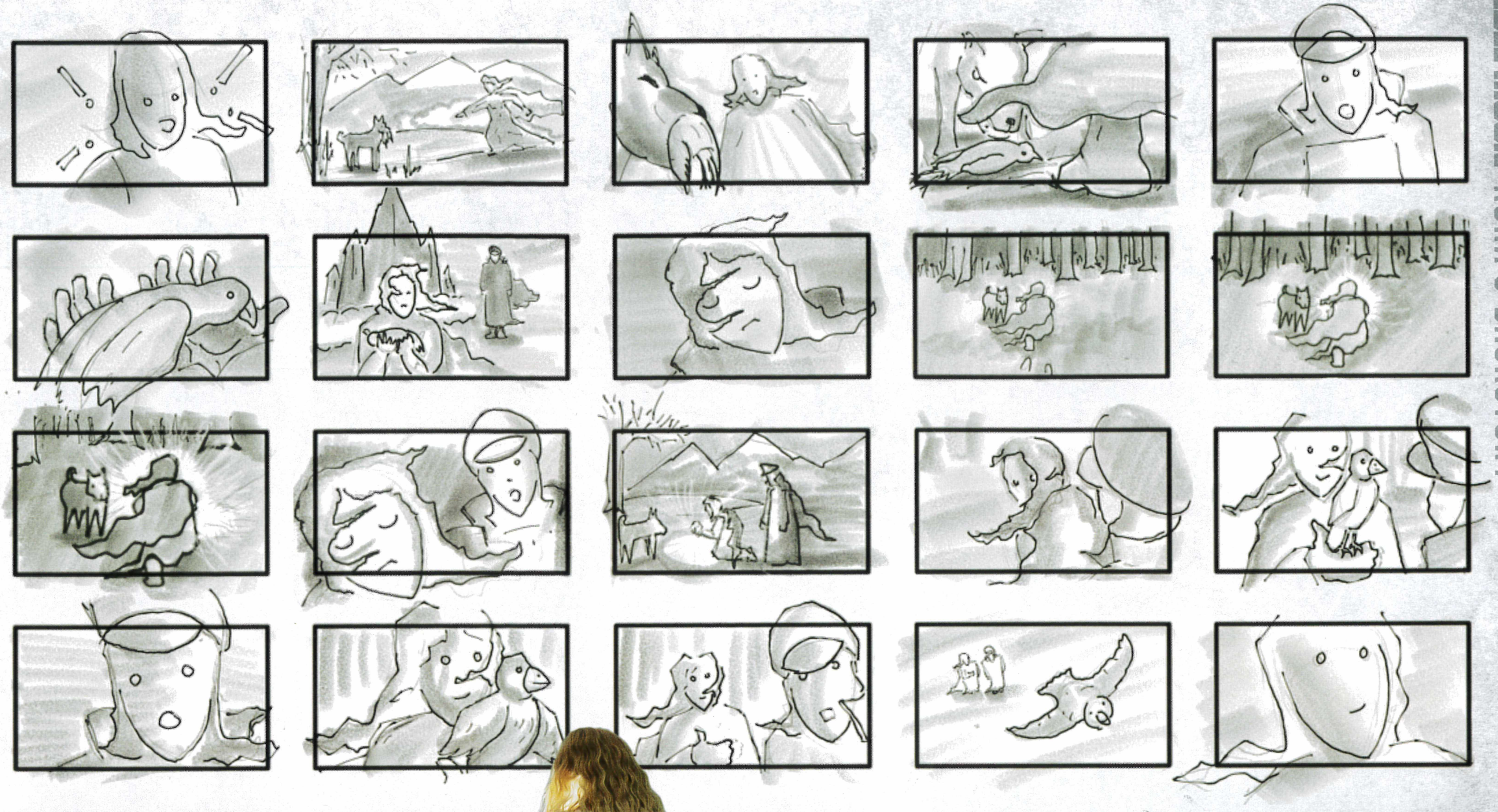
with unshakable pride. From this experience and many others, she tells Gunnar, she knows that Noble will never give up until he has taken everything from Veldt—because that's what she would do.

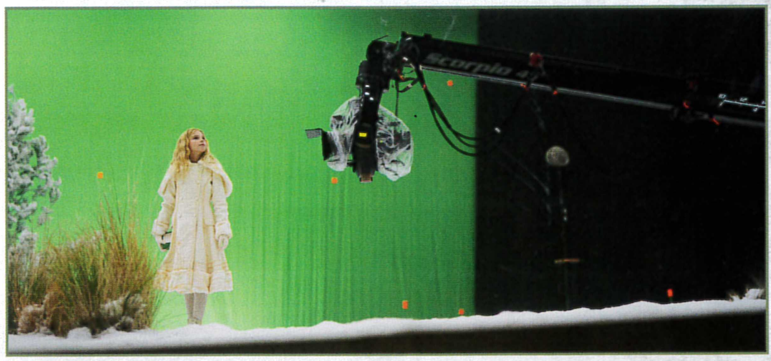
In the hold of Kai's freighter, Kora continues her story to Gunnar... Her military successes (and those of Balisarius) allowed her to reach the rarified heights of being a personal bodyguard to the royal family. Her charge is the Princess Issa, whispered by some to be the reincarnation of a legendary Queen Issa from the realm's mythic past, said to be the ideal of kindness and compassion, with the power of healing and life giving. On the grounds of the winter garden, Kora witnesses something that leads her to wonder whether those whispers might be true. The princess's dog bounds into the bushes, scaring a flock of birds into the sky. It emerges with one, inanimate, in its mouth. Issa takes the poor thing into her warm hands and, before Kora's eyes, the bird flutters to life and flies away. Could this girl be the one prophesied to bring peace to the universe?

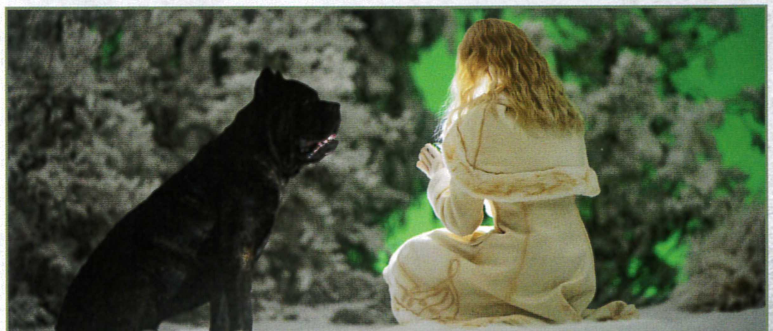
She later speaks of her bond with Issa to the King, telling him how special the girl is. He agrees, and is glad that his daughter is under her protection, for he feels there are many who won't welcome the kinder realm that will be born with her reign.

▶ Princess Issa appears to perform a miracle.







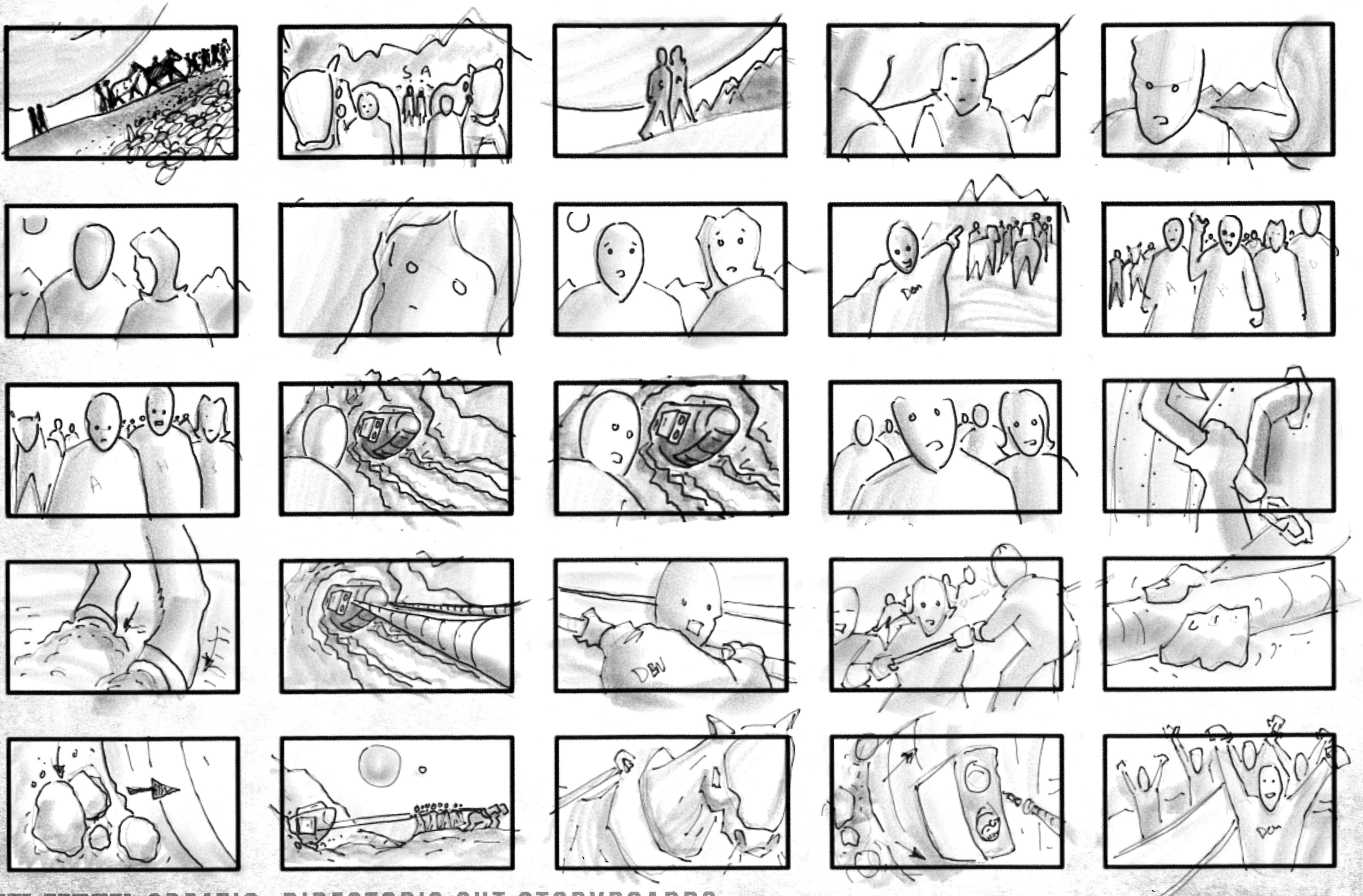


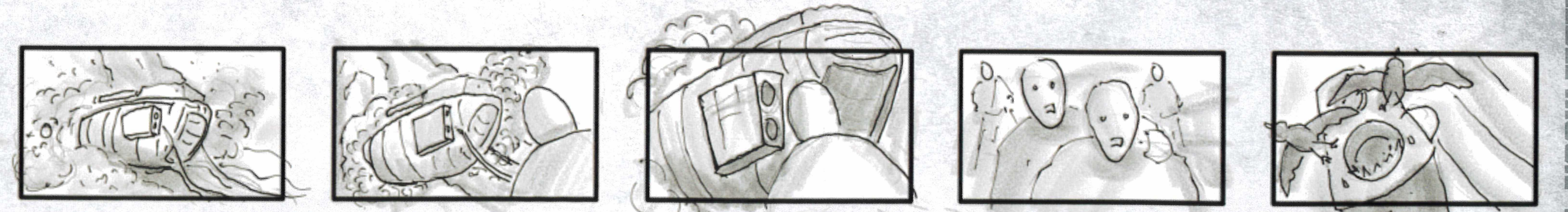
JIMMY ON VELDT

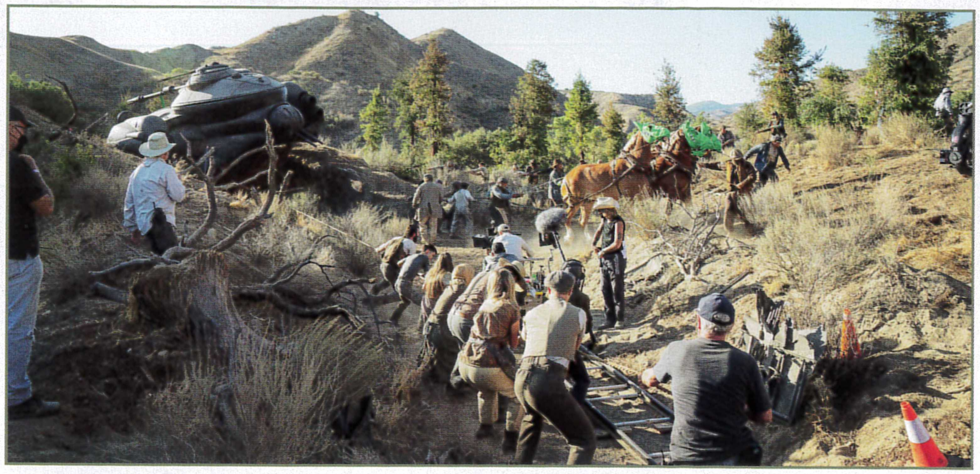
THE DIRECTOR'S CUTS of *Rebel Moon* also allow us to spend more time with Jimmy, and in doing so, gain a greater insight into one of the more enigmatic characters of the saga. A nearly indestructible artificial soldier created hundreds of years ago to serve in the Mechanicas Militarum at the behest of the King, Jimmy is undergoing a crisis of faith that began with the assassination of the royal family and is only accelerating due to the strange events and relationships he experiences following his arrival on Veldt. Whatever spark of honor his creator imbued him with will have to carry him through his solitary search for purpose on this new world with its new reality.

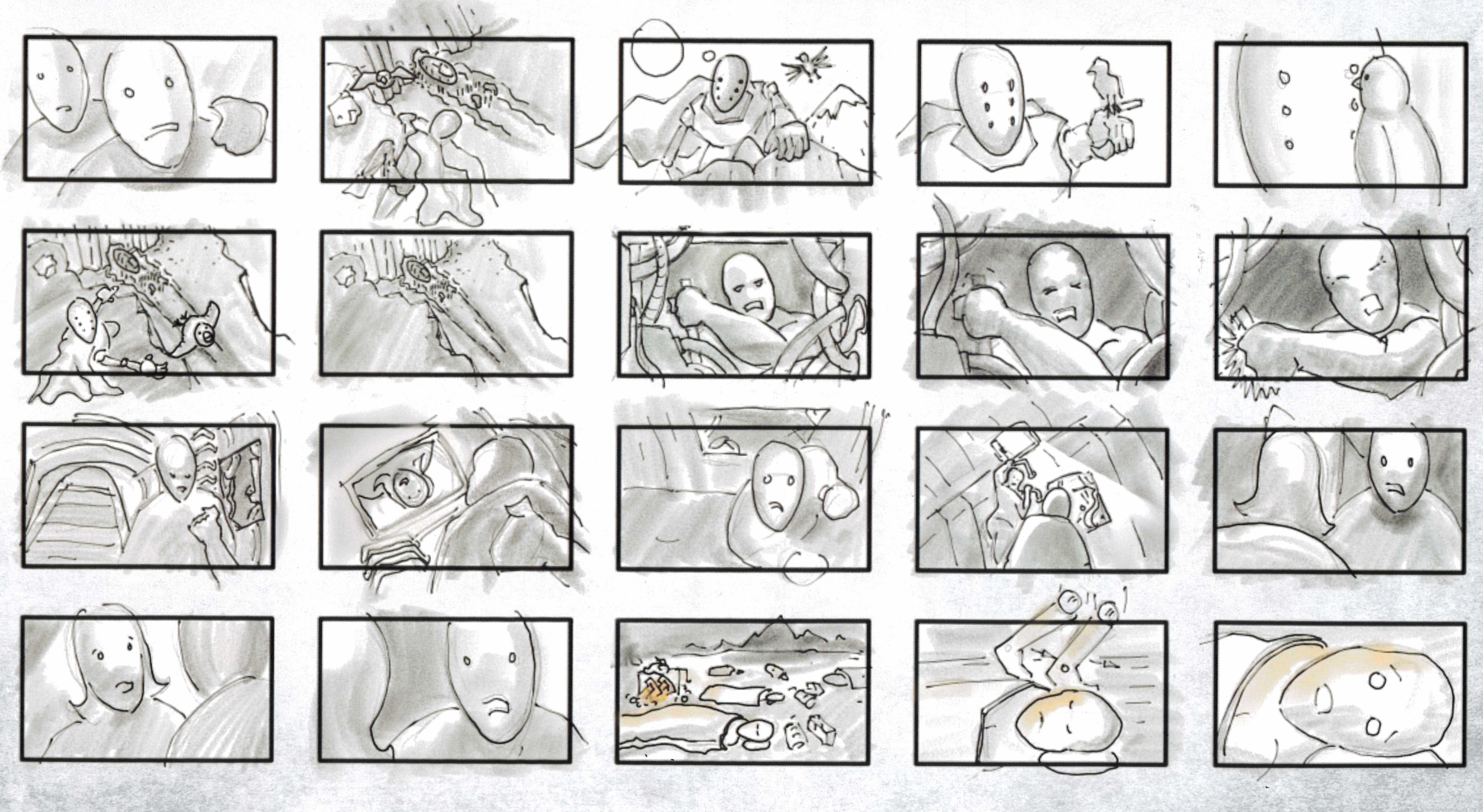
From the beginning, Jimmy was literally forged with the belief in his mission, as witnessed by the plethora of symbols stamped and etched into his metal body. "Wolf, Würm, Chalice—he's a mashup, purposely, of all the Motherworld creation myths. They really wanted to give him, in his identity and his design, this connection to the mythological in

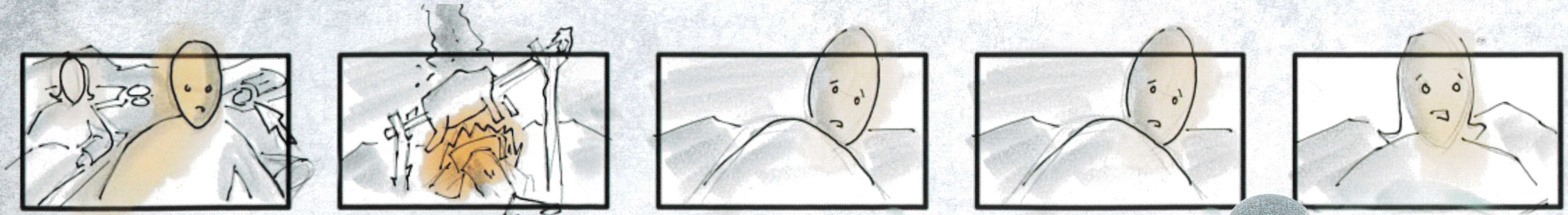
▶ Filming the Veldt villagers retrieving Kora's crashed dropship.

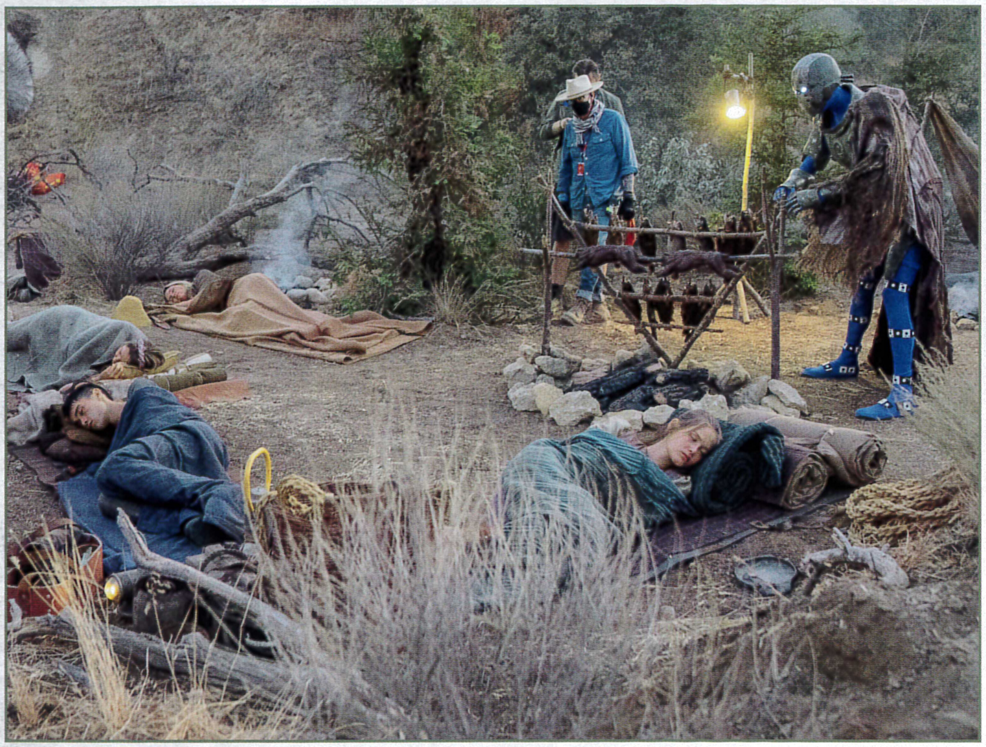


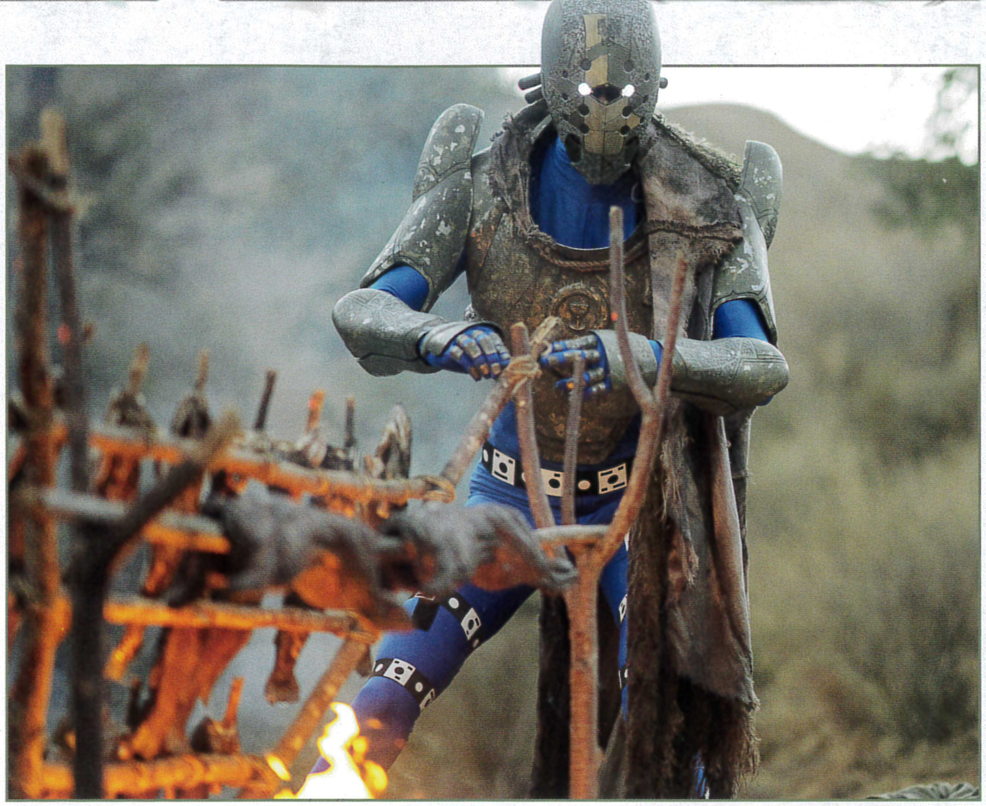


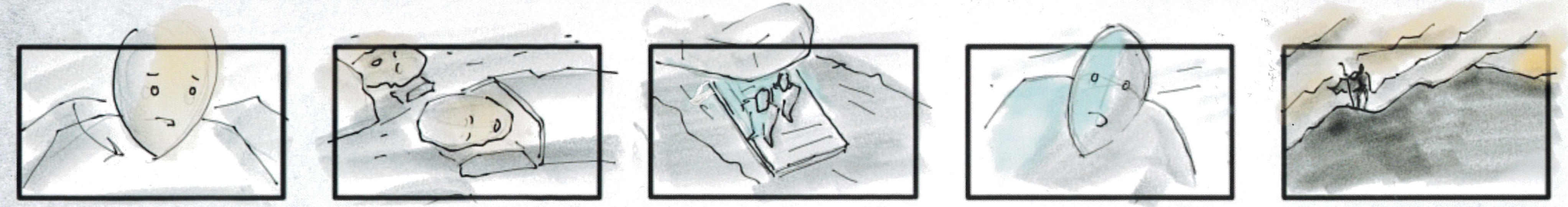












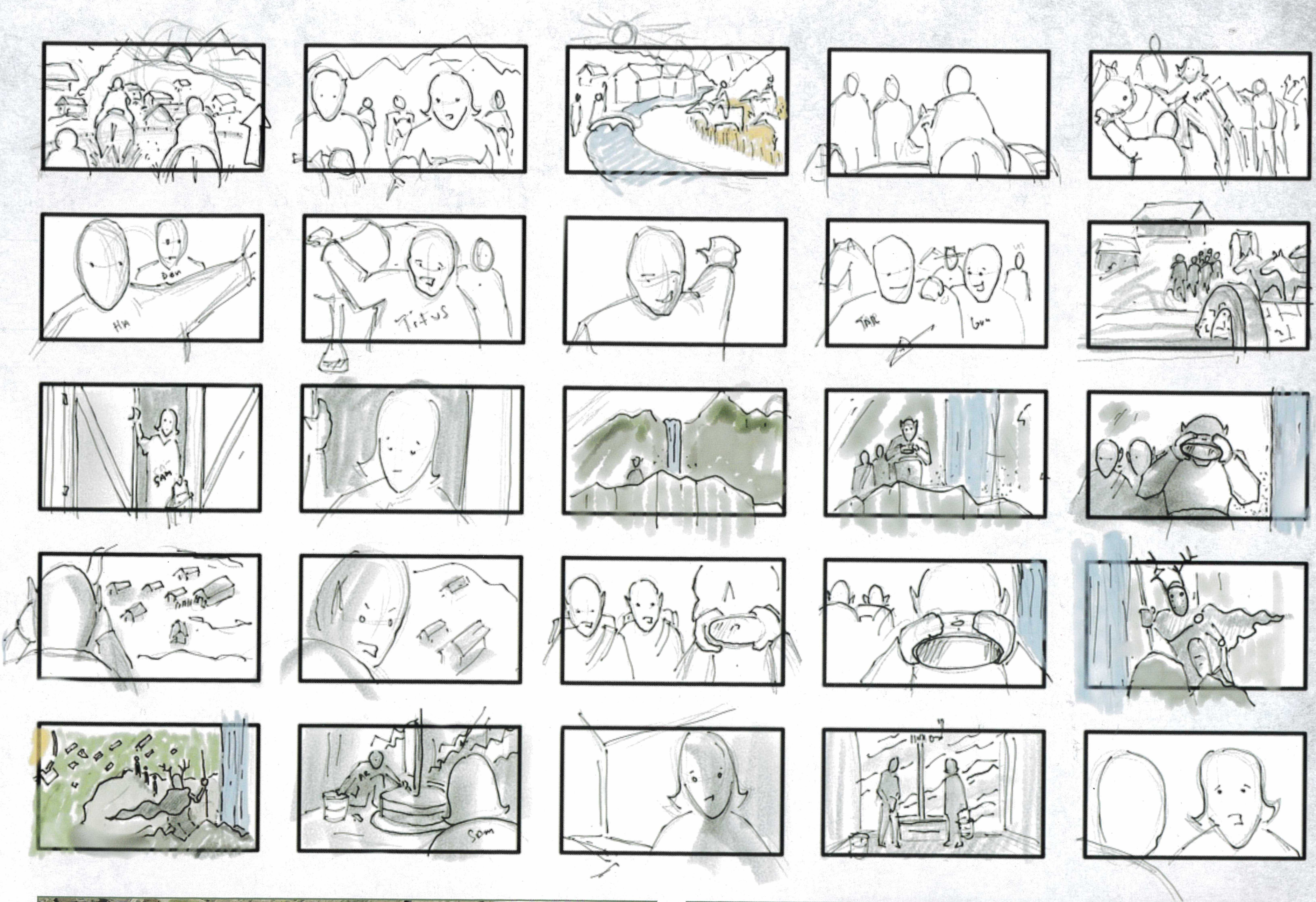
the Motherworld's story, so that he could feel as if he was connected to the eternal. There would be a quest after he's perished, and there was a quest before he was created," Snyder explains.

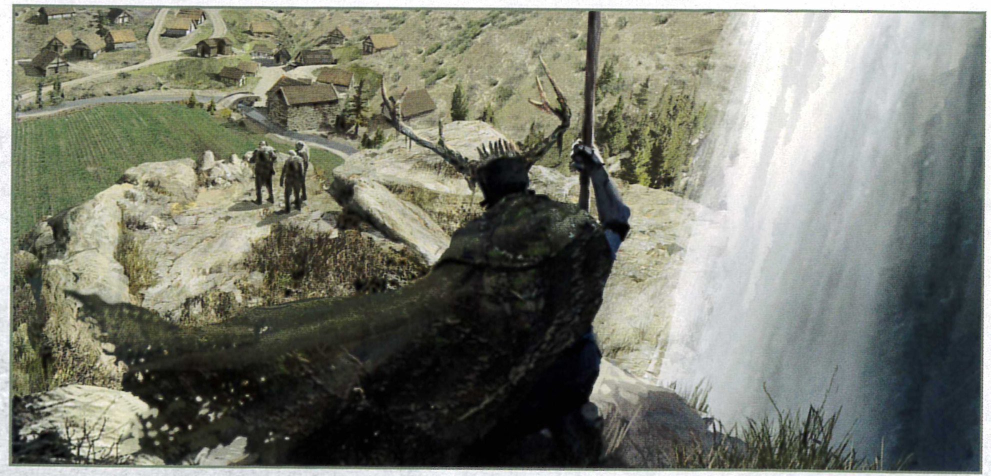
That timeless bond served him well when he was sent to conflicts far from his "home" and far from the seat of power, ordered repeatedly to commit what would otherwise be considered questionable acts. "There's a version where he was briefly on the Motherworld, maybe manufactured there, but then immediately shipped off to the front and has been living on a dreadnought for two hundred years," Snyder says. "He's as close to the royal family as a foot soldier in Vietnam would have been to the President of the United States, but he carries in him this profound belief in his mission—even on the outskirts of the Motherworld's realm, fighting a dark war against a people that deserve not to be destroyed. In his mind, he's been so indoctrinated, that if it be the will of the royal family, and therefore by proxy the will of Issa, he'll do it. He doesn't judge. There's no moral judgment of the act beyond that it be in honor of Issa."

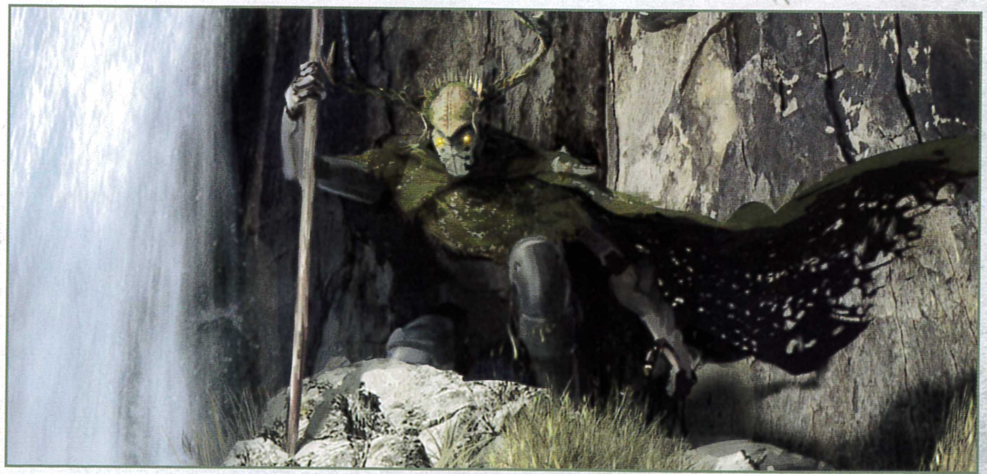
When the royal line ended—and especially with the death of the princess—that moral certitude was ripped away from him. The immediate effect on all the Jimmys everywhere was that they refused to fight. Fighting seemed to have no purpose for them without an Issa to fight for, not even for their own self preservation. "If your whole existence is to search for an Issa to die for, and then Issa dies before you do, that's a crisis of conscience and faith, and everything gets messed up. You're

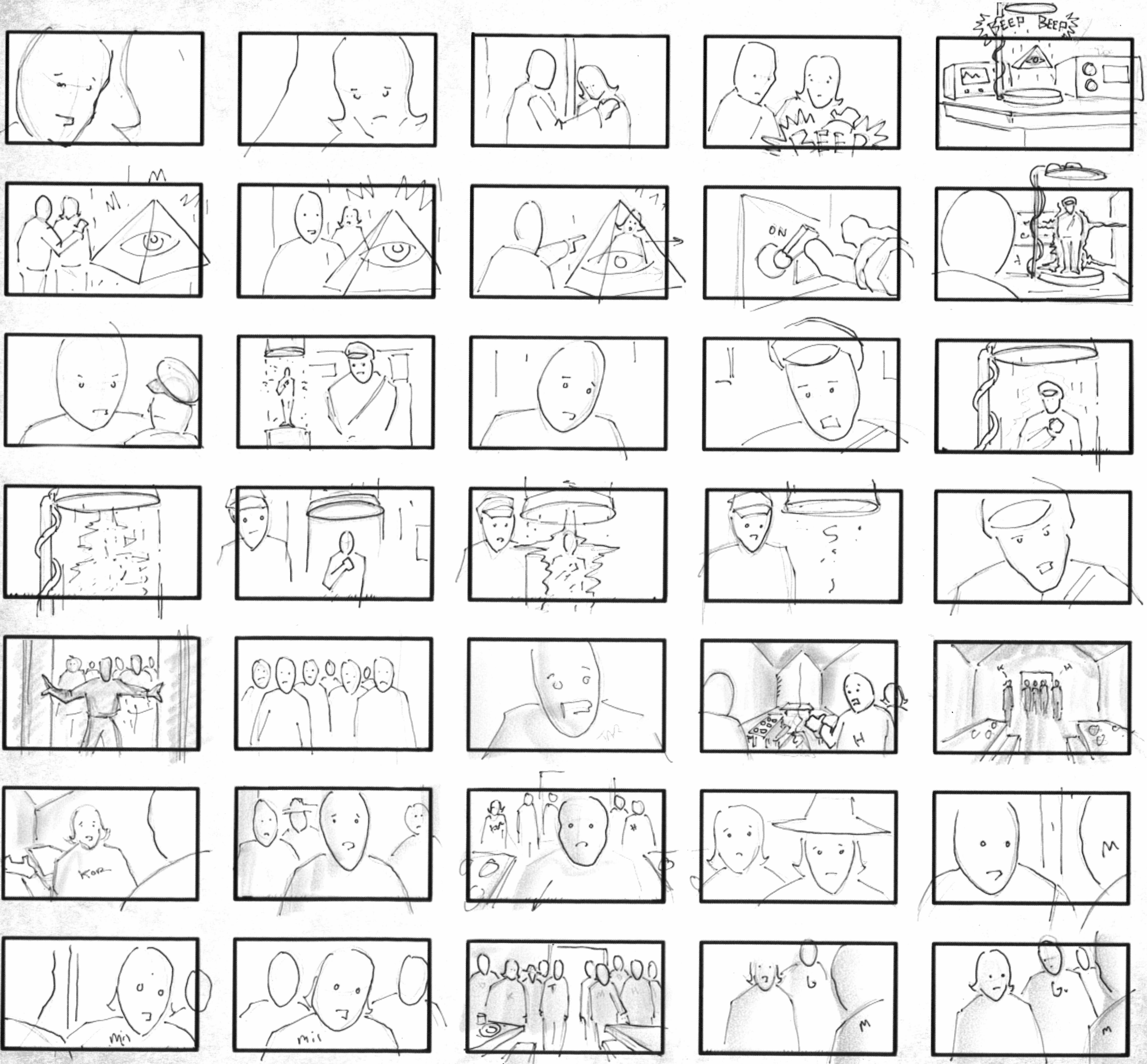
▲ Filming Jimmy (Dustin Ceithamer) leaving a gift of rabbits for Aris (Sky Yang) and Sam (Charlotte Maggi).

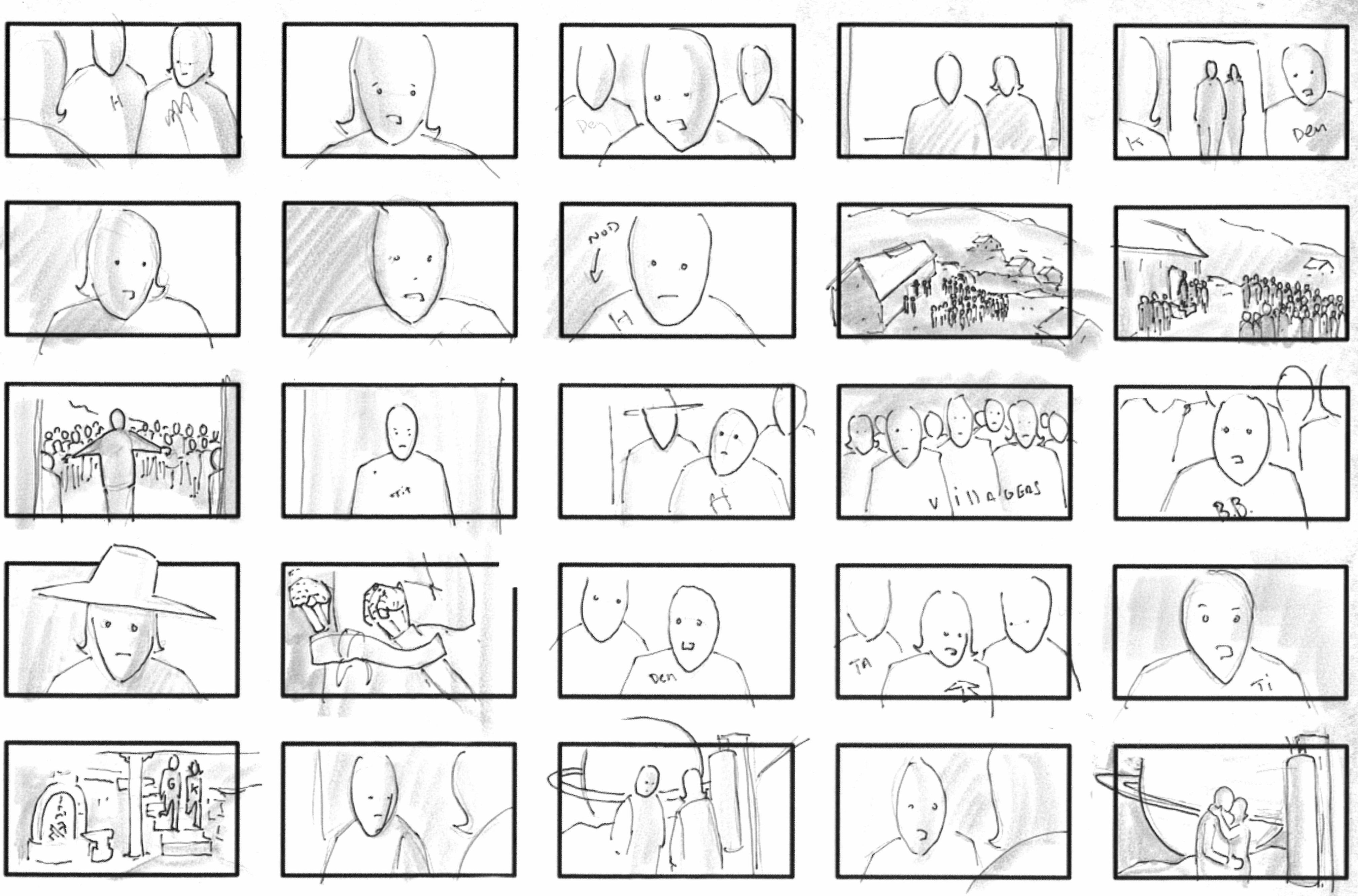
▶ Concept art of Jimmy watching the Hawkshaws as they watch the village.


Kora
Ha
Don
Titus
Tar
Gun
Sam
Sam






BEEP BEEP
BEEP
M
ON
K
H
H
KOR
M
Mi
Mi
K
T
H
G
M
G
M



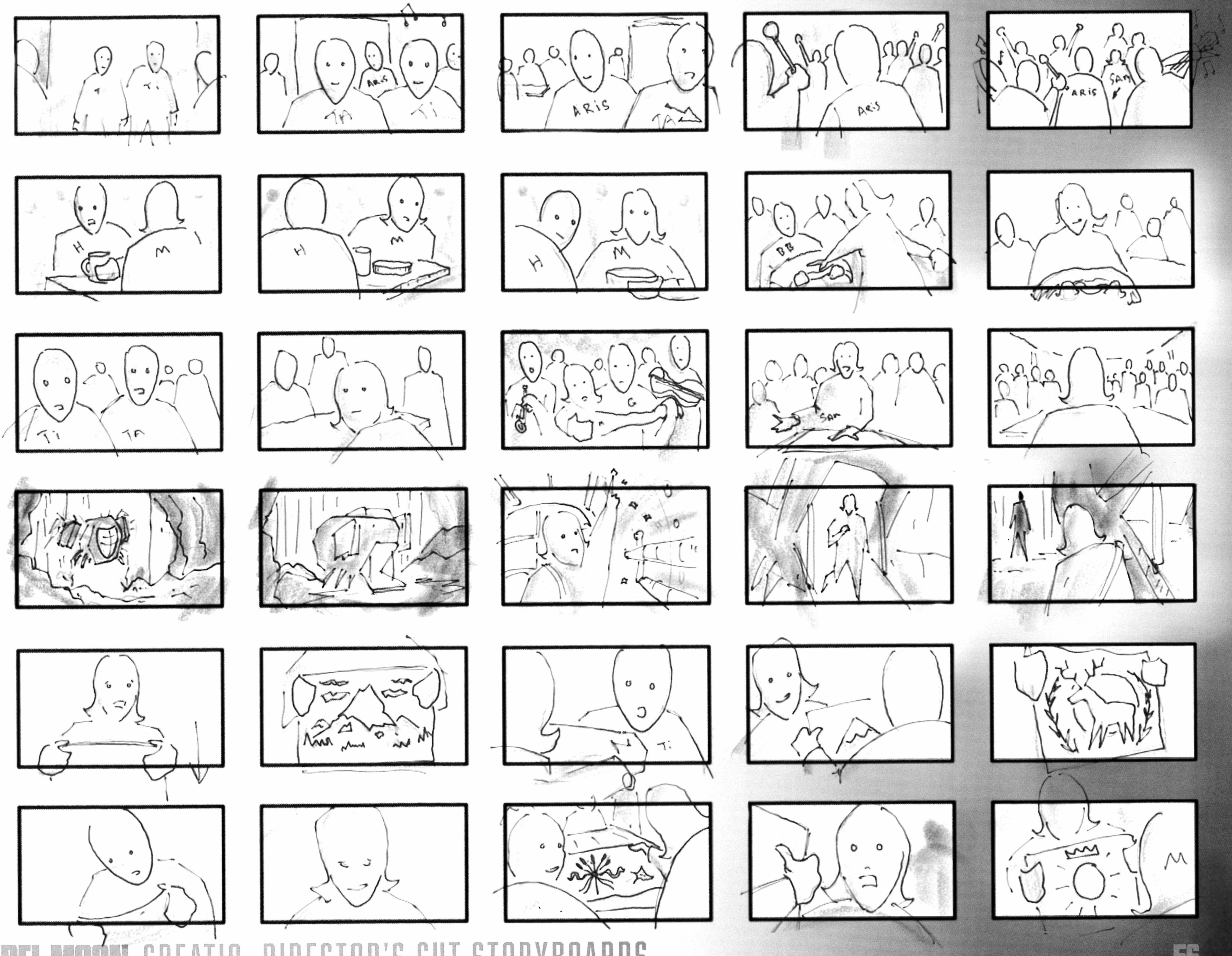
out of order, and that's where we find our Jimmy," Snyder says.

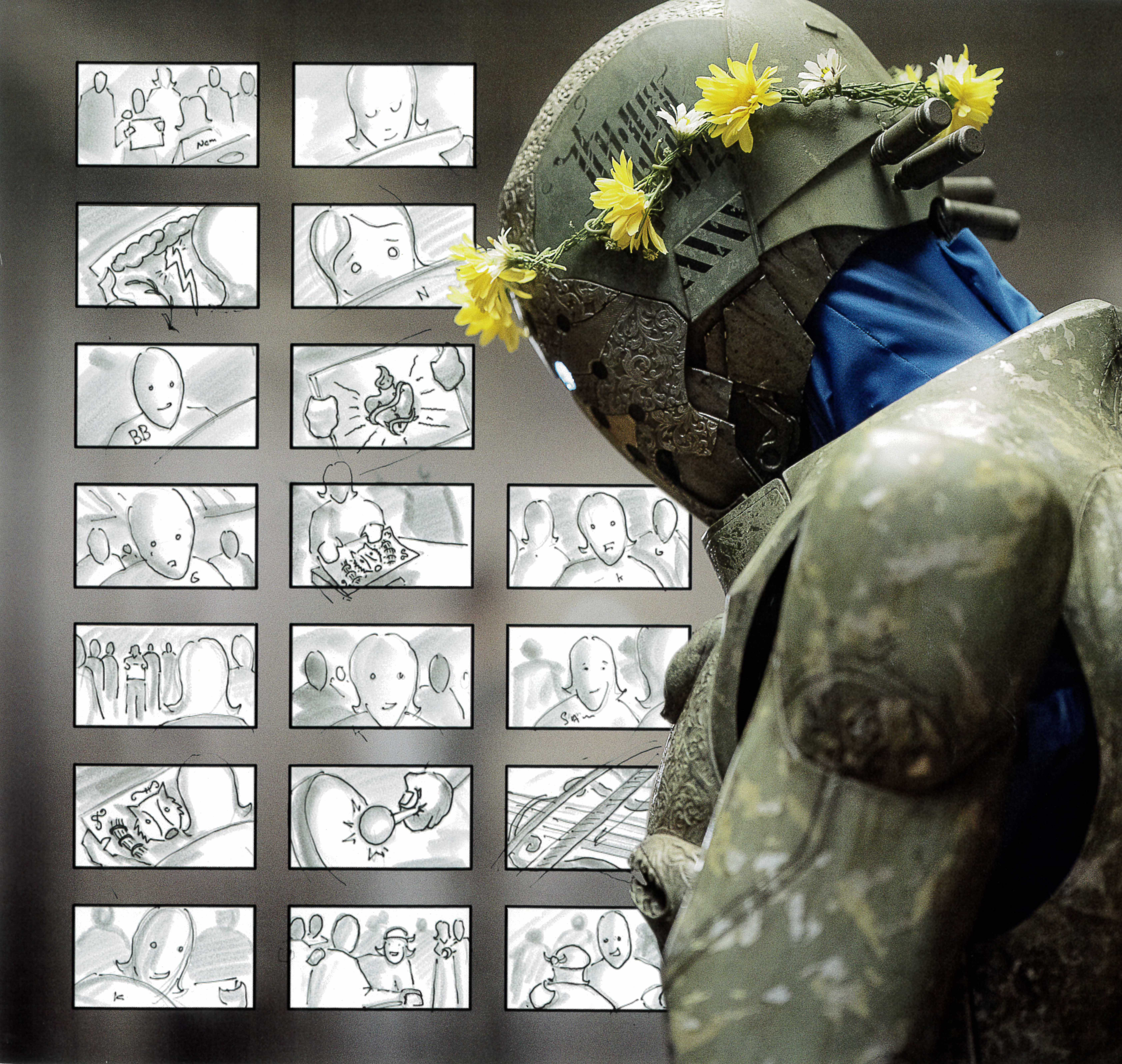
Things begin to change when he's taken out of the box on Veldt. After being attacked and humiliated by Marcus, Jimmy is sent to the river to wash the uraki dung off his face. There he encounters Sam. "When he's talking to Sam, Sam gives him the flowers and sees him—probably for the first time in a very long time—as something other than a piece of equipment. She acknowledges his nobility in some ways," Snyder says. Jimmy, in turn, sees in Sam something that reminds him of Princess Issa. Perhaps there is a vein of compassion and kindness in this place that he can tap into?

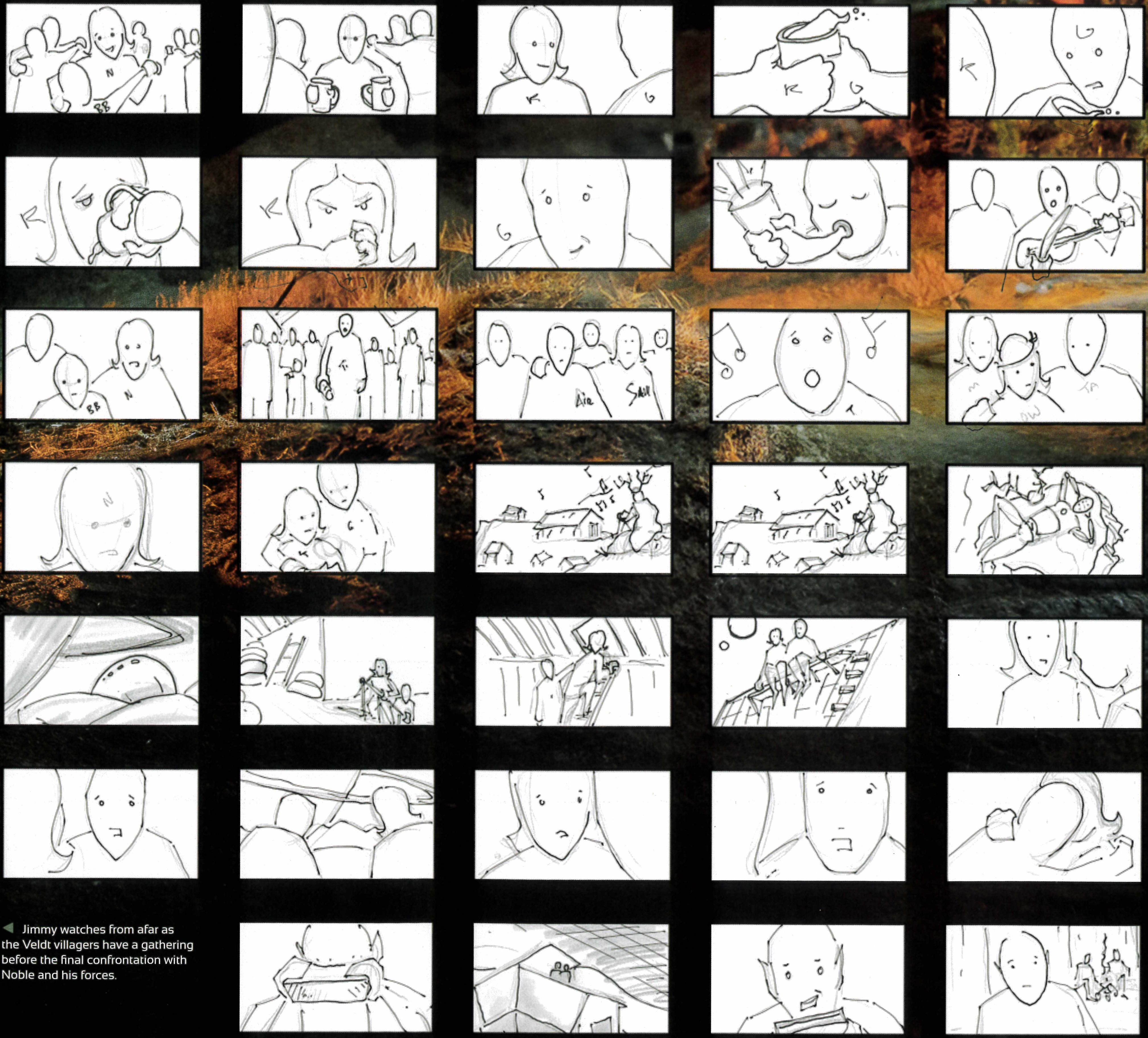
He is still unsure when he returns to the granary to find Sam in Faunus's clutches. One can almost see the wheels turning as the decision-making process eats at him, but in the end, he chooses to break the chain of command and defy that centuries-old moral code that once guided him. "Not only does he not take the direct order that Faunus gives him to kill Kora, but he kills Faunus instead, which is a pretty radical choice, given the options that were available," Snyder says. "He could have thrown the gun down and made a run for it. There's a lot of things he could have done, but he chose what I would say is probably the most aggressively independent thought solution. That choice, which is the product of the death of Issa, him being reminded of her by Sam, him being lost and not knowing what his protocols are, all that stuff led to this."

Suddenly rudderless, he flees into the wilds of Veldt to explore and contemplate his actions and his entire existence. In many ways he's like a ronin or an Arthurian knight errant, wandering here and there, without a place where he truly fits in. We catch snatches of his journey: he lets fireflies land on his finger, and they briefly take on Jimmy's color; he finds the corpse of a deer in the woods; he fixes Kora's crashed dropship that Aris and the villagers have pulled from the furrow it dug; Sam spots him checking on the villagers out in the wheat fields, clearly wanting to help them, but not knowing how. Fans of *Excalibur* (1981)—among who Snyder proudly counts himself—will no doubt see Jimmy's stealthy gift of rabbits to Aris and Sam

▶ Jimmy wears the crown of flowers Sam gave him.




Nom
N
BB
G
G
k
Sam
k

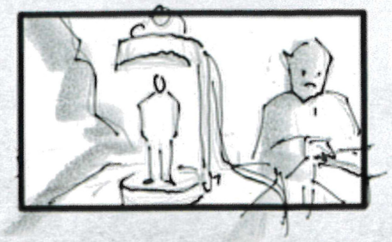


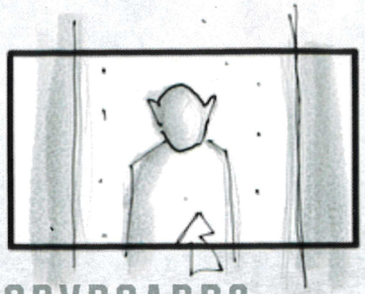
◀ Jimmy watches from afar as the Veldt villagers have a gathering before the final confrontation with Noble and his forces.

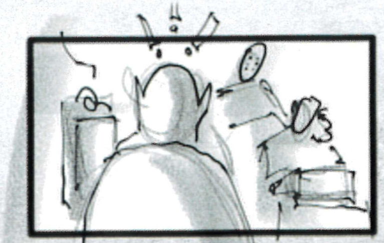
▲ The Hawkshaws—(bottom left photo, left to right) Syra (Ben Geurens), Kaan (Kendall Wells), and Streep (Raphael Corkhill)—in their encampment overlooking the village.

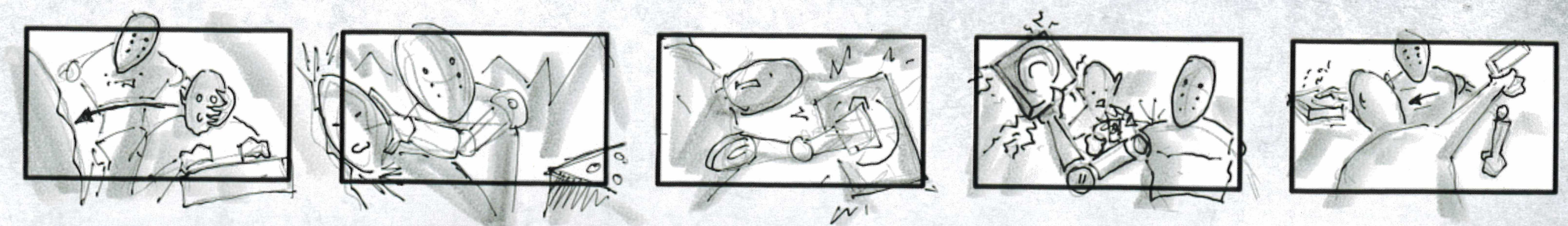
as an homage to knight-to-be Perceval's similar gift to Sir Lancelot. "He wants to be a knight. He's kind of a combination of a lot of knights, but there's certainly an *Excalibur* reference in his existence," Snyder says.

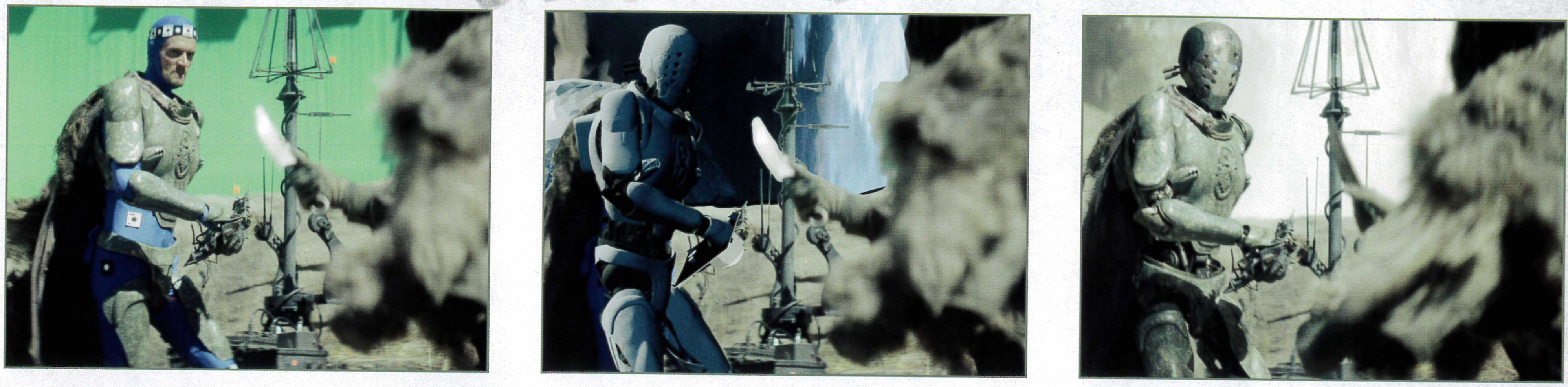
Jimmy's internal struggle, and the progress he makes fighting through it, becomes externalized in the gradual but conscious changes he makes to his appearance. "When he takes the cape off the scarecrow, it's all in an effort to recapture the inherent nobility that was the Jimmys' original mission statement: to protect the unborn Issa and to be in service to the Chalice, so that Issa might be born and peace and prosperity and kindness would return to the dominion of the Motherworld," Snyder explains. "Finally, of course, we see him in the field in the rain. He's got



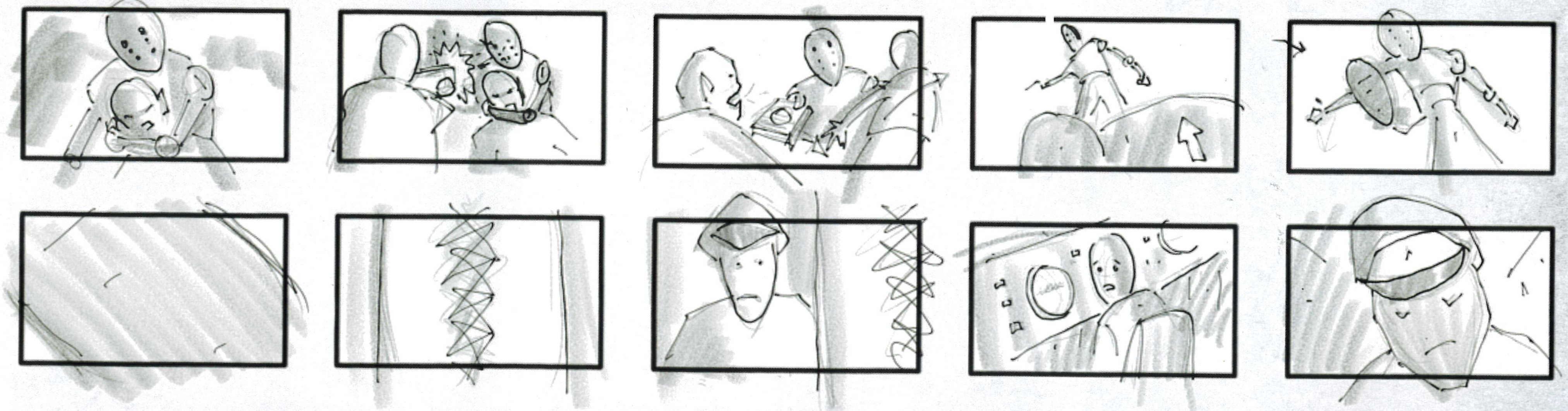


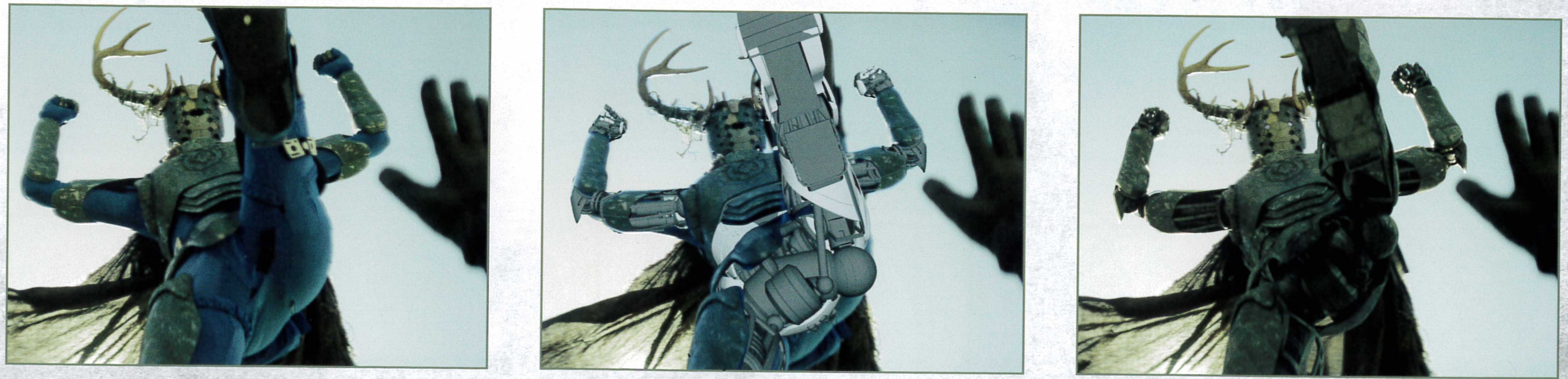






▲▼ In progress and final visual effects shots of Jimmy killing the Hawkshaw spies in their encampment.





his horns on, he's got his walking stick, he's got his cape. He's kind of communing with nature. So, at this point he's at peace with his impotence in not saving Princess Issa. He no longer blames himself for her death, and is able to find his place in the natural world. He's elemental, the same as lightning, the same as earth. He's become part of Veldt."

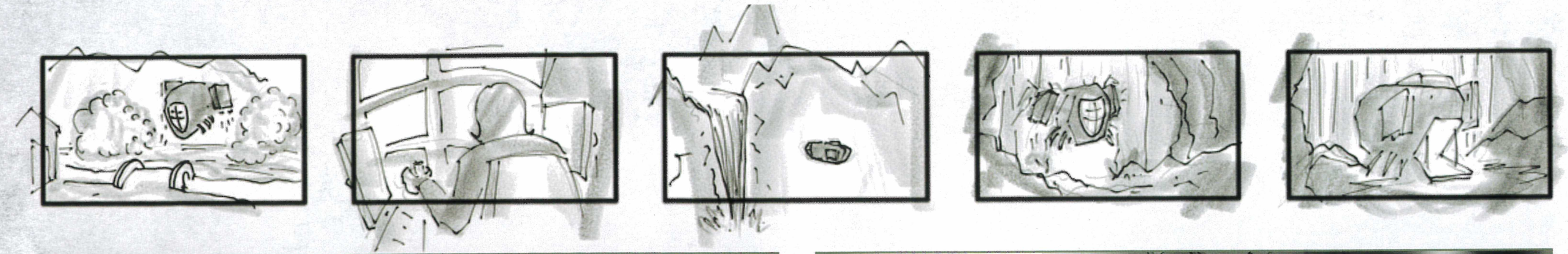
Being a force of nature with a deep connection to a place brings with it a certain amount of freedom, but also an obligation to defend that place. He kills the team of Hawkshaw spies and wipes out their encampment, knowing that they're transmitting information about the villagers' defenses back to *The King's Gaze*. He also commits fully and decides to join forces with the Veldtians as a last line of defense, showing the forces of the Motherworld that flesh has little hope of standing up to a fully operational Jimmy intent on destruction.

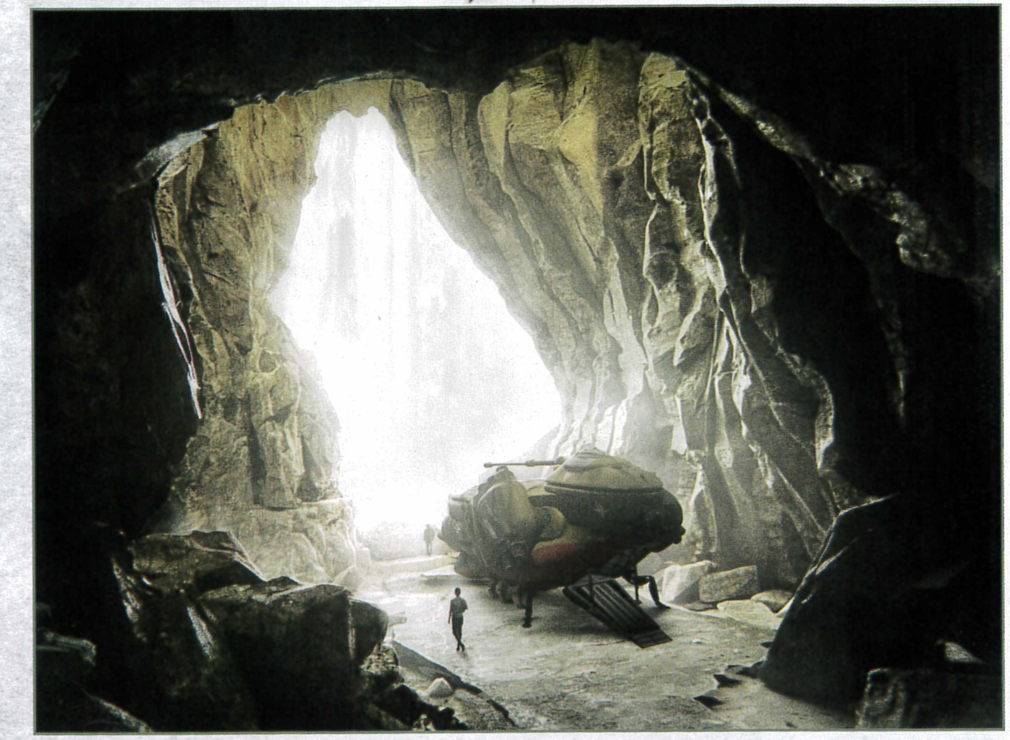
For all his triumphs on the battlefield, though, perhaps for Jimmy his greatest victory is over himself. He has smashed the calcified belief system that held him back for so long. "In a greater way, he's got a perspective on his religion—if his religion is the worshiping of Issa. He's able to see her as mythological, and as eternal, and what she symbolizes. So he realizes he can still exist without the *person*," Snyder explains.

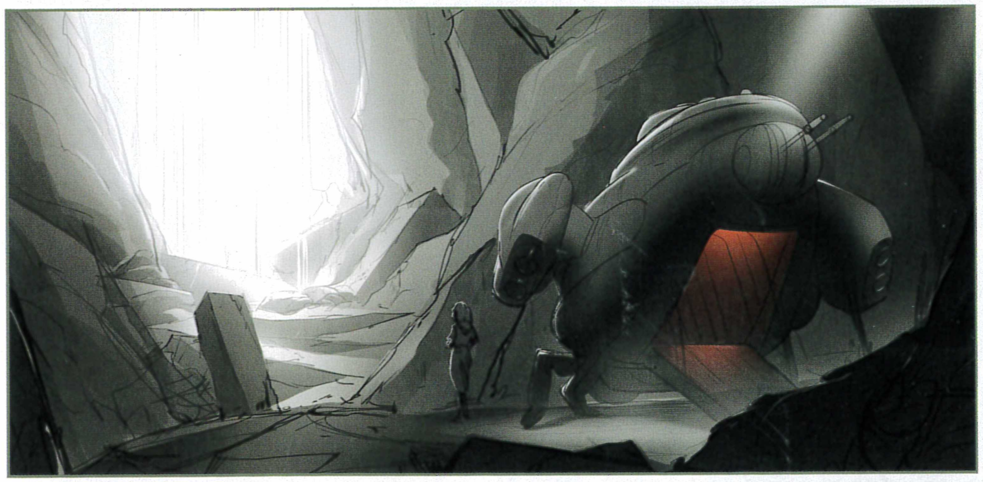
Still, valiant knight that he is, Jimmy cannot then resist a chance to seek out that eternal ideal and bring it back into the world. "At the end of movie two, of course, he is ready to go on a quest to find the Issa that is not dead," Snyder says.

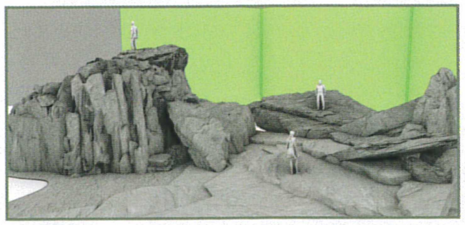
▼ Concept art and 3D models of Jimmy meeting Kora in the cave behind the waterfall.

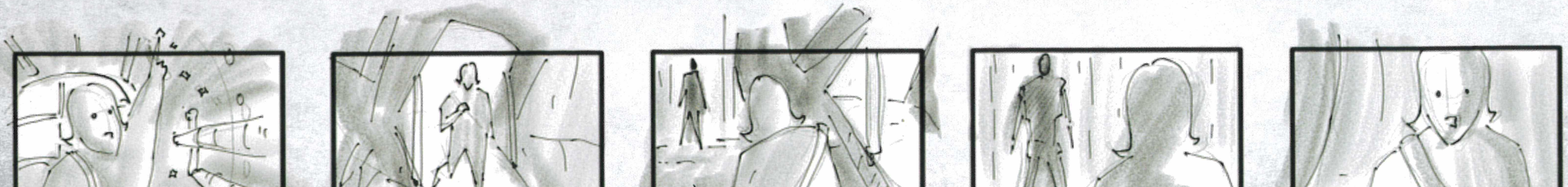
▶ Jimmy contemplates his existence in the wilds of Veldt and fights against the Motherworld forces on the Veldt battlefield.











his horns on, he's got his walking stick, he's got his cape. He's kind of communing with nature. So, at this point he's at peace with his impotence in not saving Princess Issa. He no longer blames himself for her death, and is able to find his place in the natural world. He's elemental, the same as lightning, the same as earth. He's become part of Veldt."

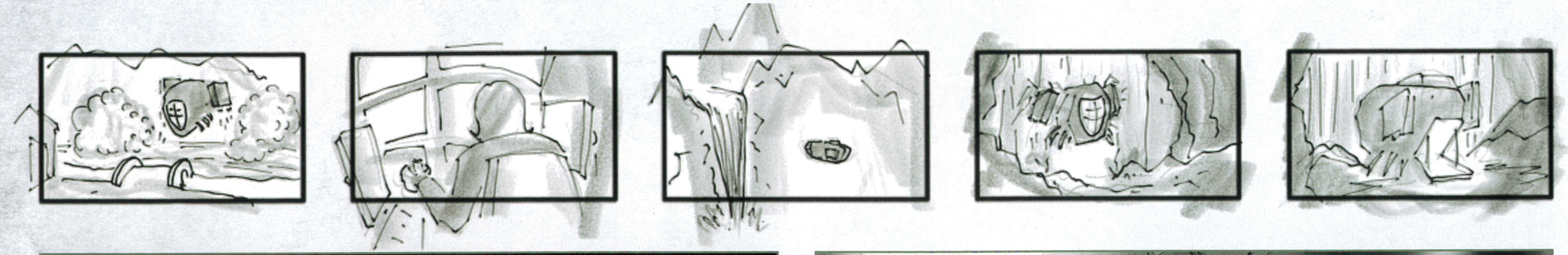
Being a force of nature with a deep connection to a place brings with it a certain amount of freedom, but also an obligation to defend that place. He kills the team of Hawkshaw spies and wipes out their encampment, knowing that they're transmitting information about the villagers' defenses back to *The King's Gaze*. He also commits fully and decides to join forces with the Veldtians as a last line of defense, showing the forces of the Motherworld that flesh has little hope of standing up to a fully operational Jimmy intent on destruction.

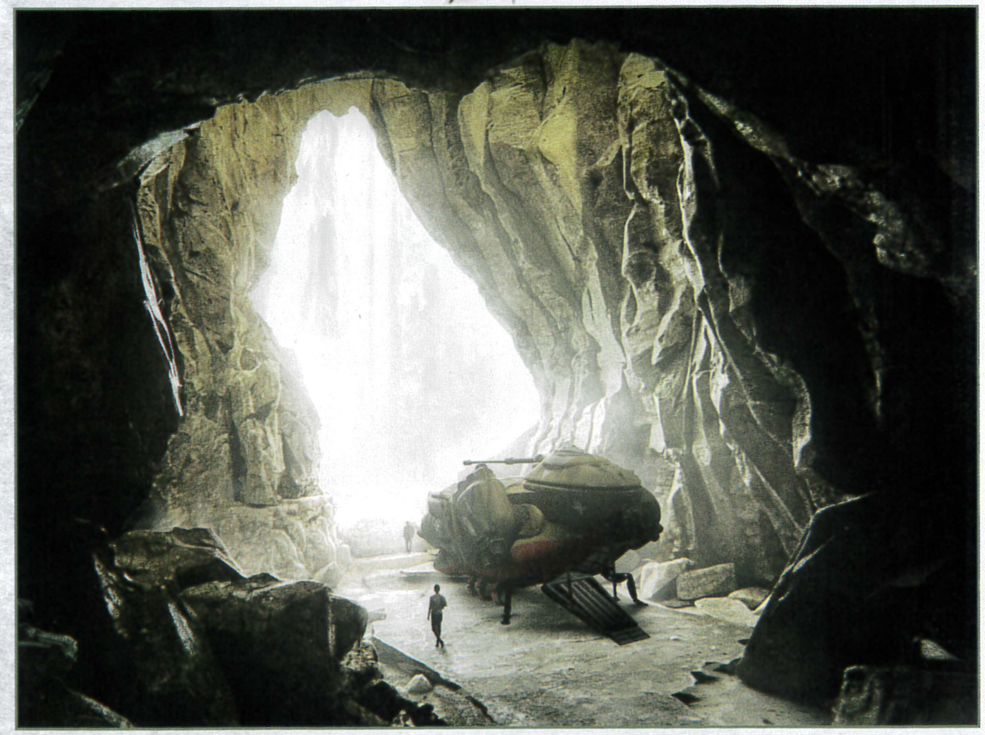
For all his triumphs on the battlefield, though, perhaps for Jimmy his greatest victory is over himself. He has smashed the calcified belief system that held him back for so long. "In a greater way, he's got a perspective on his religion—if his religion is the worshiping of Issa. He's able to see her as mythological, and as eternal, and what she symbolizes. So he realizes he can still exist without the *person*," Snyder explains.

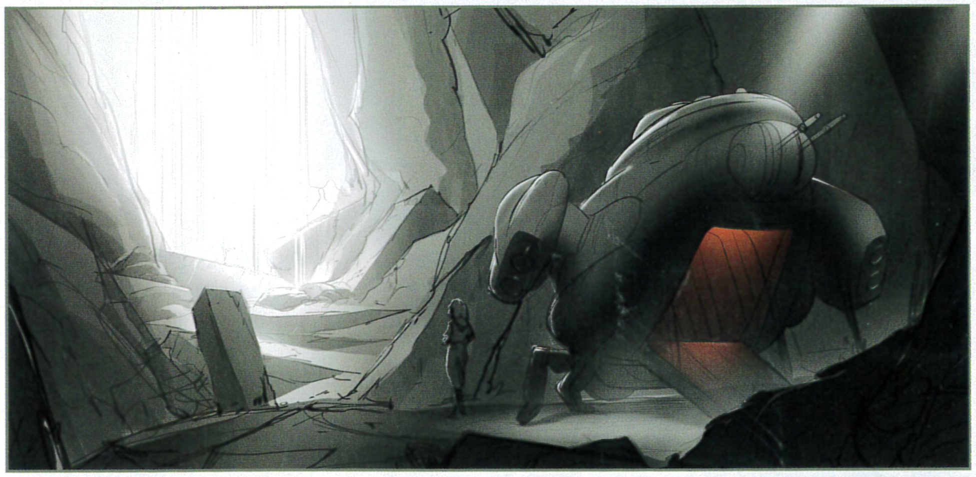
Still, valiant knight that he is, Jimmy cannot then resist a chance to seek out that eternal ideal and bring it back into the world. "At the end of movie two, of course, he is ready to go on a quest to find the Issa that is not dead," Snyder says.

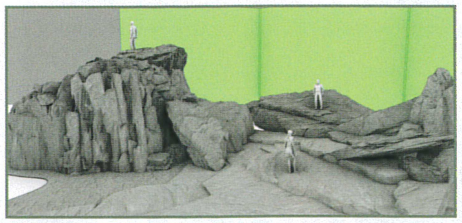
▼ Concept art and 3D models of Jimmy meeting Kora in the cave behind the waterfall.

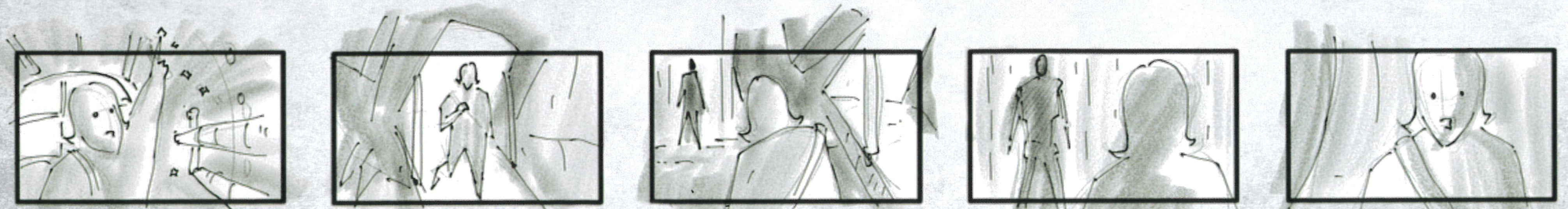
▶ Jimmy contemplates his existence in the wilds of Veldt and fights against the Motherworld forces on the Veldt battlefield.

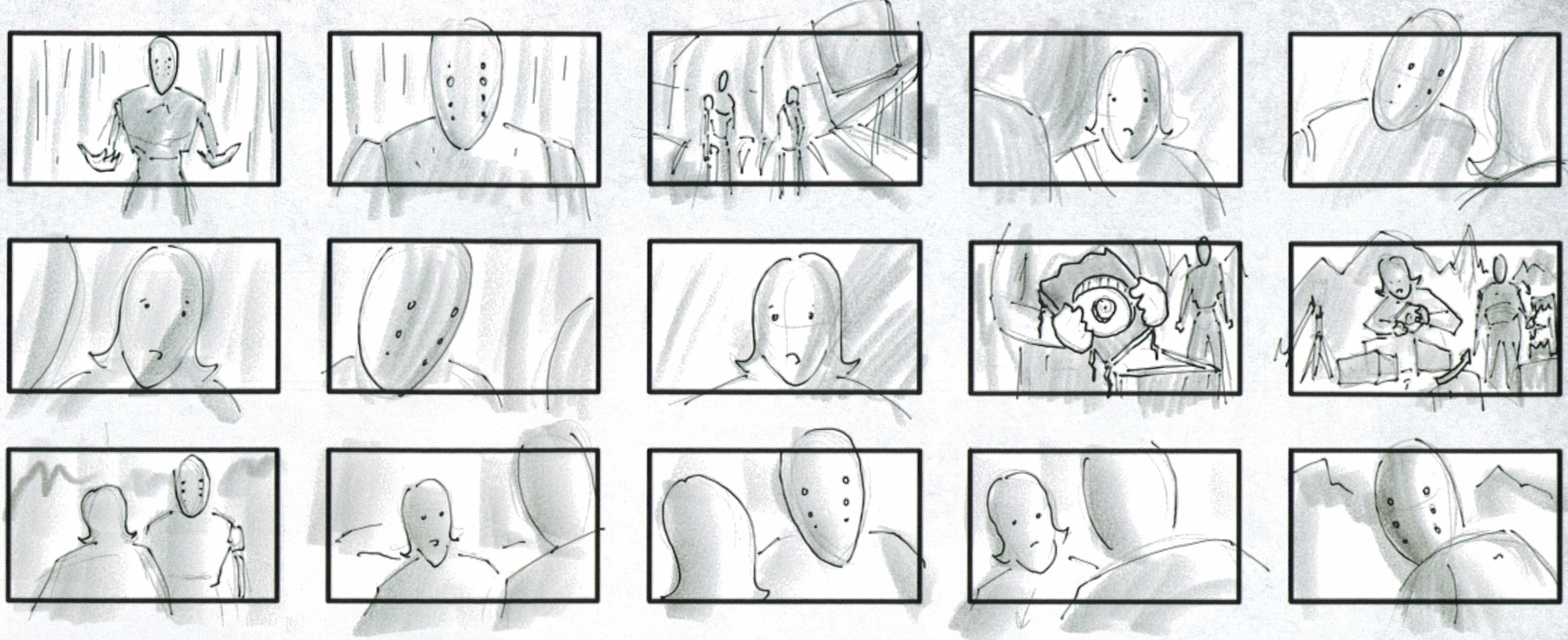


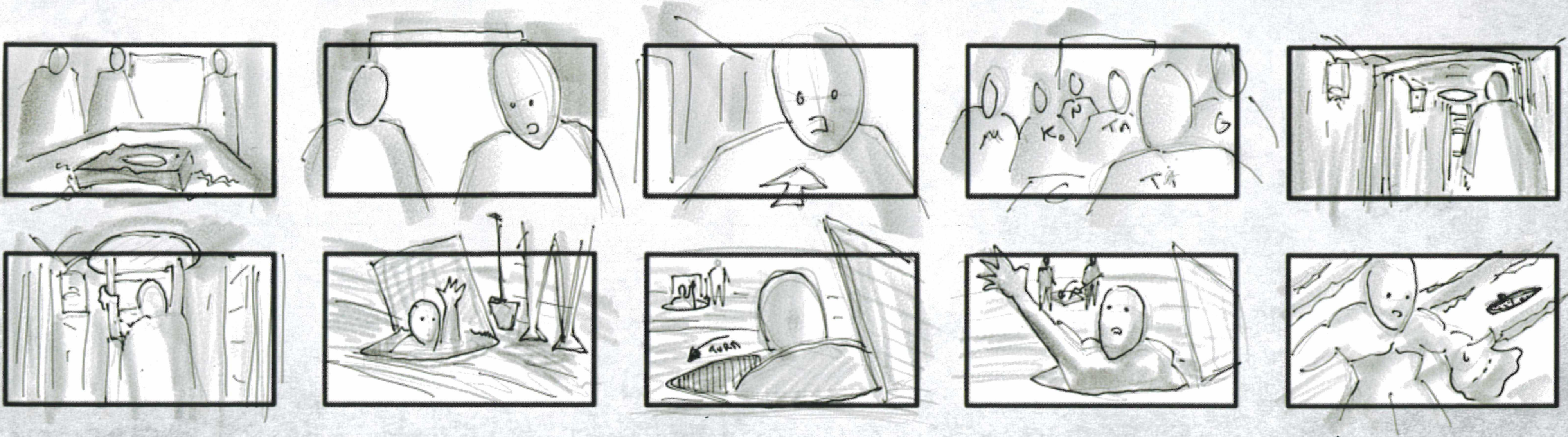












Jimmy has become part of Veldt.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Aperlo has written numerous art and making of film and video game books, including *Watchmen: The Art of the Film*, *Watchmen: The Official Film Companion*, *Chappie: The Art of the Movie*, and *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice: The Art of the Film*, and most recently *Army of the Dead: The Making of the Film*. He also scripted the console video games *Watchmen: The End is Nigh (Parts 1 & 2)* and *The Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole*. A film he co-wrote, *Devil's Gate*, premiered at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival. He is currently working on *Twilight of the Gods*, an animated series for Netflix.

Rebel Moon: Creatio: Director's Cut Storyboards
ISBN: 9781803365244

Published by
Titan Books
A division of Titan Publishing Group Ltd
144 Southwark St
London
SE1 0UP

www.titanbooks.com

First edition: August 2024
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

REBEL MOON ™/© Netflix. Used with permission.

Photography by Clay Enos, Chris Strother and Justin Lubin.

Did you enjoy this book? We love to hear from our readers. Please e-mail us at: readerfeedback@titanemail.com or write to Reader Feedback at the above address.

To receive advance information, news, competitions, and exclusive offers online, please sign up for the Titan newsletter on our website, www.titanbooks.com

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

A CIP catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in China.

REBEL MOON ™/© Netflix. Used with permission.